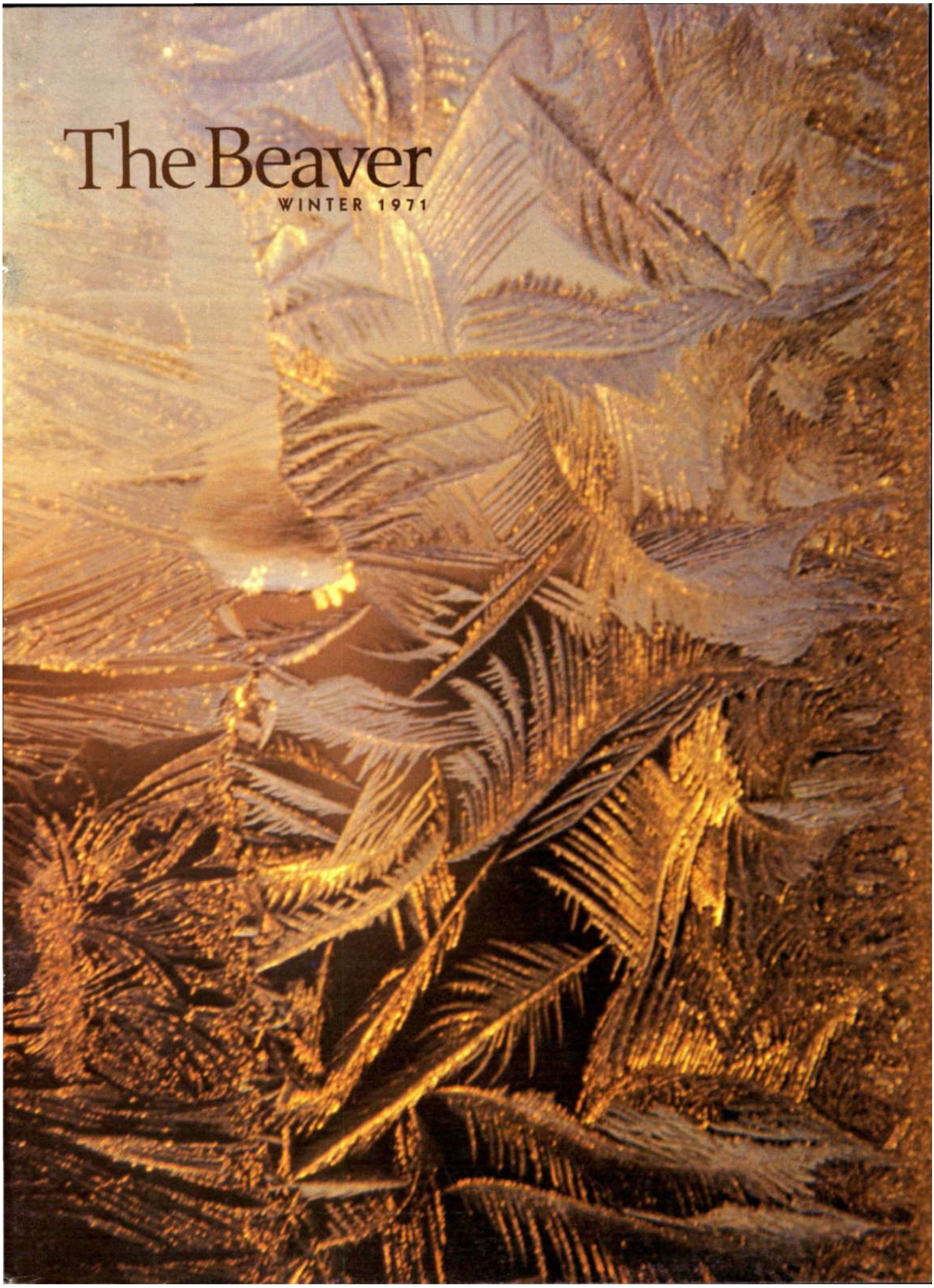
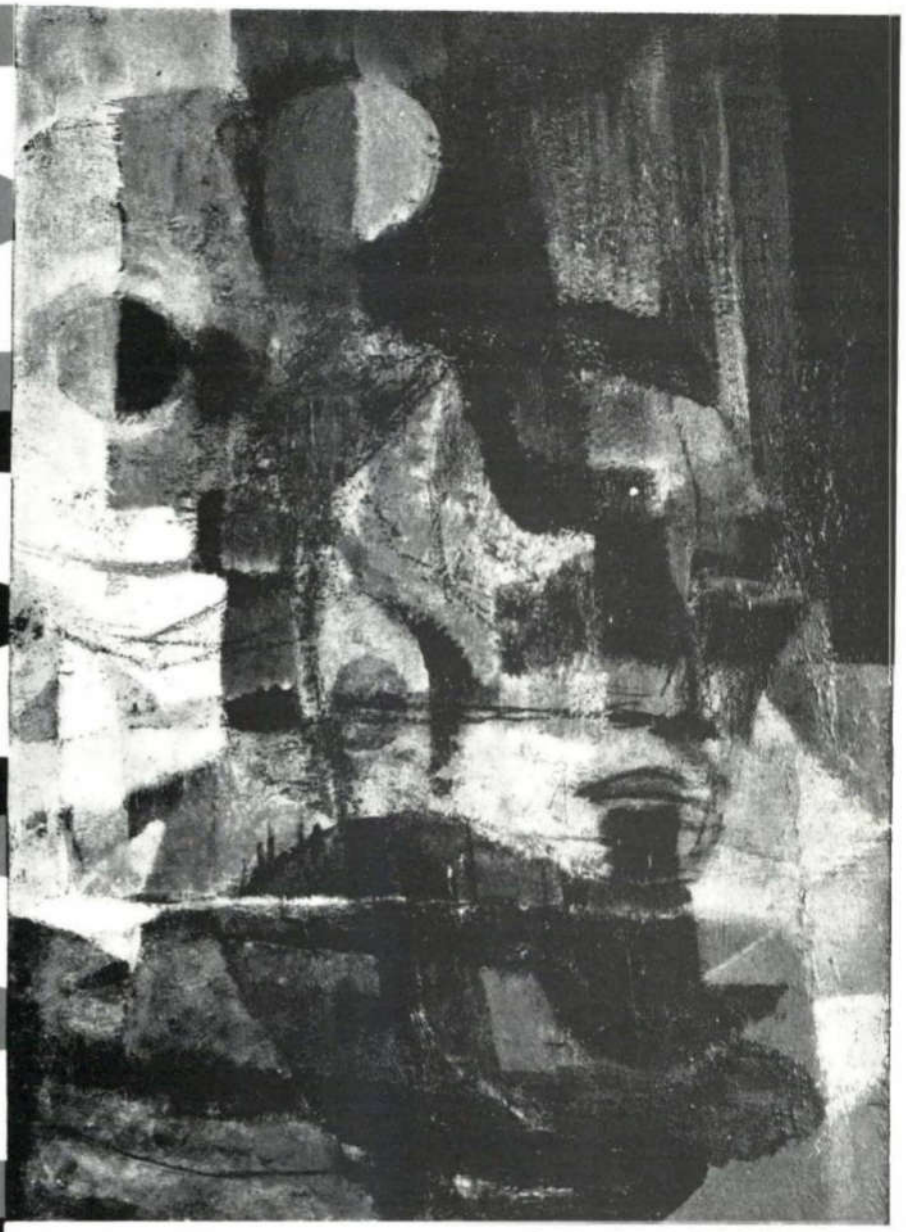
The Beaver

WINTER 1971





From the painting by R. York Wilson, R.C.A.

Some Account of MATONABBEE, *and of the eminent Services which he rendered to his Country, as well as to the Hudſon's Bay Company...* SAMUEL HEARNE.

MATONABBEE was the ſon of a Northern Indian by a ſlave woman, who was formerly bought from ſome Southern Indians who came to Prince of Wales's Fort with furrs, *&c.*

It is impoſſible for any man to have been more punctual in the performance of a promiſe than he was; his ſcrupulous adherence to truth and honeſty would have done honour to the moſt enlightened and devout Chriſtian, while his benevolence and univerſal humanity to all the human race *, according to his abilities and manner of life, could not be exceeded by the moſt illuſtrious perſonage now on record

Hudson's Bay Company

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

WINTER 1971
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The Beaver

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Editor: Malvina Bolus, SM

From Hind's sketchbook in the Public Archives of Canada

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WILLIAM HIND AND THE OVERLANDERS

BY J. RUSSELL HARPER

art historian, author of numerous books on Canadian art and artists, and organizer of many special exhibitions.

All illustrations by Hind.

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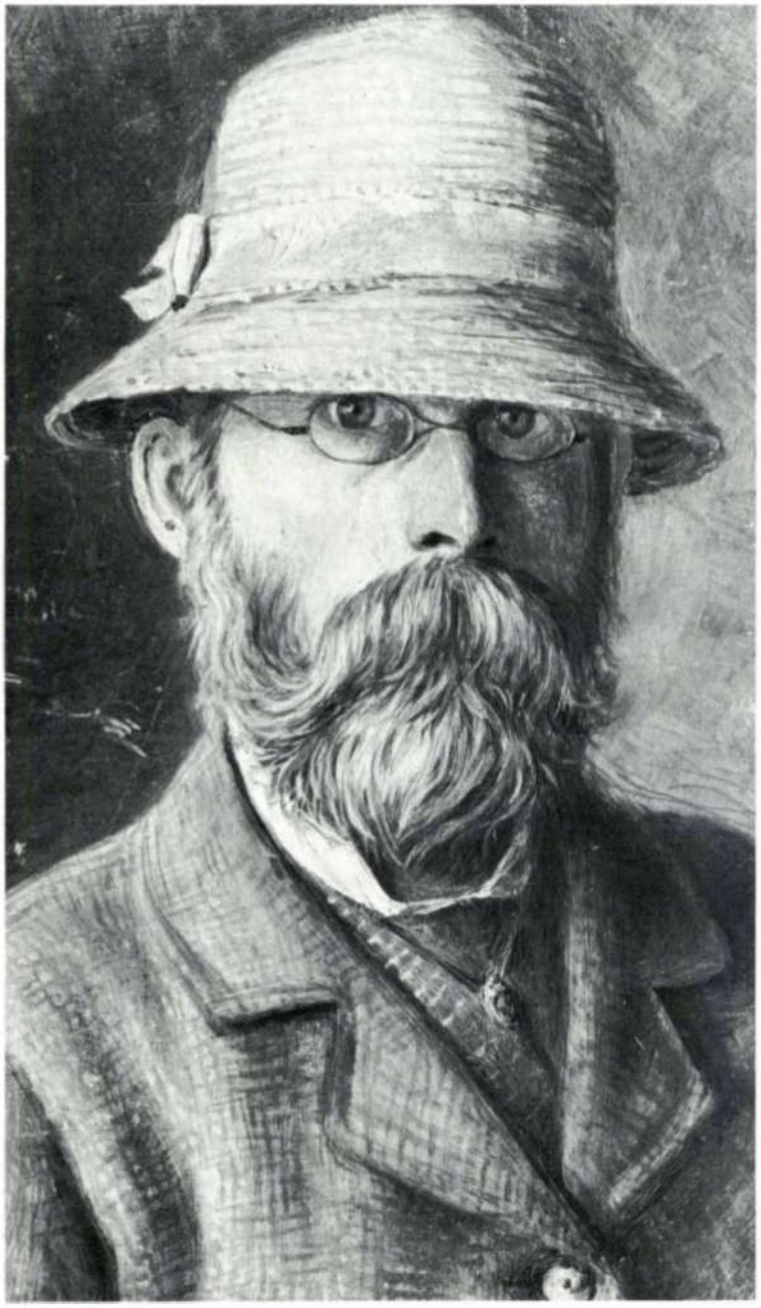


William Hind, self portrait.

THE TORONTO *GLOBE* printed long and glowing stories describing rich gold fields in the distant Cariboo during the winter of 1861-2. The most graphic of these reports had been collected (in British Columbia) by a special correspondent for the august *Times* of London. They described the 'fickle goddess' giving one man thirty-one ounces of gold in a day, while others found nothing. The articles warned that

> Professional gamblers track the successful miner as the carrion crow scents the dead on the battlefield. The clink of money and the sound of gambler's voices is heard at all hours. Monte and pharo and poker games are all the go. Large sums of money change hands constantly. I heard of one party that lost between 3 of them $27,000.

Despite the sinister side, such figures whetted the appetites of young Canadians already excited by thoughts of gold for the taking. Groups were organized that winter in Toronto, Ottawa, St Catharines, London, Huntingdon and other places, all interested in gold mining. Some with ready cash left by ship, skirted the eastern seaboard, and crossed to the Pacific at Panama or rounded the Horn as had others during the earlier California gold rush. Many decided on a cheaper, more novel, and far more adventurous overland crossing of the prairies and mountains. Fur traders had done this for years, and scattered reports circulated of other successful trips. Henry Youle Hind, the most recent of the western explorers, was preparing a pamphlet on the plan's feasibility. While no great numbers had previously attempted the overland trip, in late April more than a hundred and fifty men left in several parties for the fabulous Cariboo. Others joined them on the way. One was a woman, Mrs August Schubert of Fort Garry, whose husband provided a buggy for her and her three children during the first part of the trip; her fourth child was born a few hours after she reached Kamloops in October. The crossing was one of the great achievements of the old west.

METROPOLITAN TORONTO CENTRAL LIBRARY (TOP) AND MCCORD MUSEUM, MONTREAL (BOTTOM)

Roadside scene west of Fort Garry.

Buffalo magnified by mirage.

Surely no group of Canadians seeking high adventure have so thoroughly documented their escapades. Several kept diaries. Others wrote their reminiscences on arrival. One diarist, Stephen Redgrave, was a Toronto police sergeant who resigned his post only half an hour before catching the west-bound train. He left his wife in suburban Weston and wrote that he was making himself into a 'donkey' in his search for the almighty dollar. William R. G. Hind, described as the 'expedition artist', was in the Toronto party along with Redgrave and Richard Henry Alexander who kept an even more detailed diary. One hundred and sixty or more of Hind's sketches and paintings illustrate that part of the crossing from Fort Garry to Victoria in a day when the camera was not a practical field instrument. His visual record is fascinating; his personality created stormy ruptures with his companions on the way.

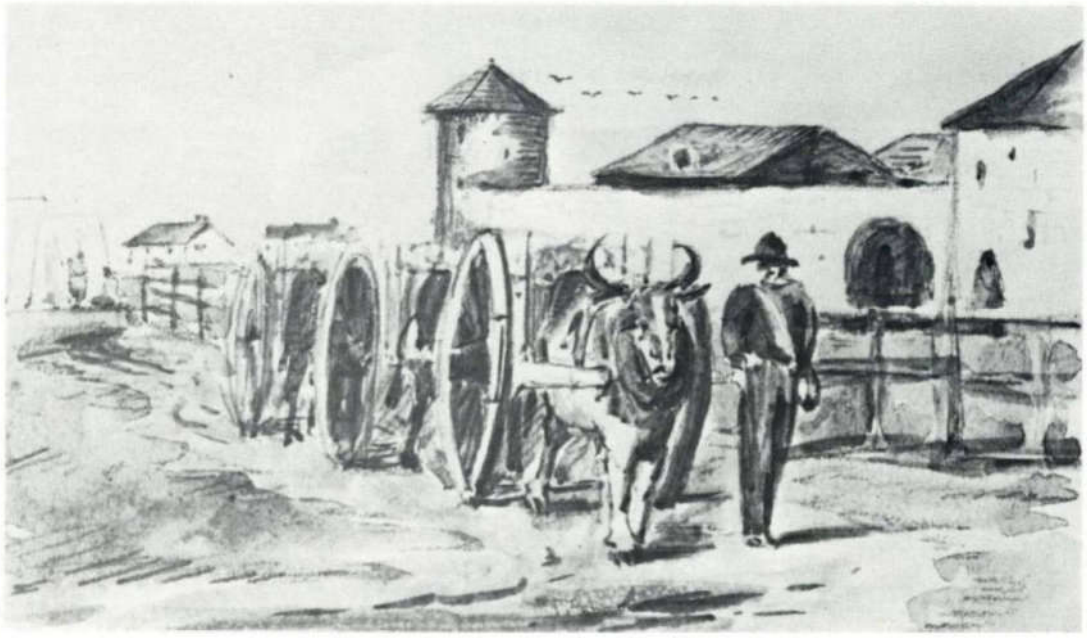
The diaries tell how the groups left their homes in 1862 on April 22nd and 23rd. They travelled by the Great Western and Michigan Central lines over bridges weakened through spring flooding while they kept their guns at the ready fearing Indian attacks on the American prairies. The crowd was so large on one train that they cowed the conductor into giving them a first class carriage although they had purchased only second class tickets. They passed through Windsor, Chicago, and on to La Crosse where they boarded a Mississippi steamer for St Paul. Thence by stage coach and other means they reached Georgetown, head of navigation on the Red River.

Delay at Georgetown in Dakota territory was frustrating. Hind's party arrived on May 5th, confident that the inaugural run of the new steamer *International* down the Red River to Fort Garry would be made within a day or two. But construction was not completed. The boat did not sail until the 23rd and only then after the builders worked all night. Alexander Dallas, the Hudson's Bay Company's newly appointed governor of Rupert's Land, arrived by horseback on the 12th, on his way to take up his new post. Several men pointed out how dependent the Overlanders were on the Company during their continental crossing. Dallas visited their camp the night after his arrival. His personal piper played while the men danced merry reels. The Company provided other evenings of entertainment which broke the monotony of the long journey.

The paddle-wheeler *International* carried Mrs Dallas on its maiden voyage. The governor had left Georgetown several days earlier to go overland to Fort Garry. Mrs Dallas was the daughter of Sir James Douglas, knew the Cariboo well, and talked with eighteen-year-old Richard Alexander who described her as 'a very pleasant lady, quite a rarity in these parts'. Any lady was a rarity. She spoke to him about Mrs Handcock, a friend who kept an inn in the Cariboo, and he was able to pass on her greetings in person the following November. Actually the inaugural voyage was seemingly a series of endless calamities. There was a broken paddle, the smoke stacks collapsed, and there was engine failure. The river was so crooked that one man declared it navigable only by a Red River mud cat; the *International* had great trouble in negotiating the bends. On May 24th, 'the anniversary of the birth of Our Lady the Queen,' the boat was still in American waters, but the Overlanders unfurled a St George's ensign which they had made the previous day,

METROPOLITAN TORONTO CENTRAL LIBRARY

Métis making wheel for Red River cart.



Overlanders departing from Fort Garry.

and duly saluted it with a volley. Actually Alexander had spent another day at Georgetown sewing together a Union Jack since he was unable to purchase such an article in 'Yankeedom'. At dinner the night of the 24th, the 'last table was pretty select, the usual toasts were given. Mrs Dallas graced the table with her presence and Mr Black filled the chair. Bishop Taché was also present.' John Black, new recorder for Rupert's Land, was also on his way to his Fort Garry post, while Bishop Taché was to secure a guide for the Overlanders at St Boniface. Unfortunately the guide was unreliable and deserted them half way across the prairies.

At Fort Garry the gold seekers purchased horses, Red River carts, and oxen to haul them and their supplies. In the cart-makers' shops Métis were hard at work making the great wooden wheels. The men proposed to follow old trails to the mountains and then abandon wheeled transport. Hind's pictorial record of the journey began when he arrived in Fort Garry. That first day he sketched the fort, its stone wall and bastion, a complex which his companions declared 'quite a fine thing'. He included the Overlanders' tents pitched among the Indian and Métis who crowded round the post. There is even a dog, bane of all travellers. Overlanders keeping watch had fun 'popping' at them, while Stephen Redgrave shot a particularly obnoxious animal, threw it in the Red River, and hoped that by morning it would be twenty miles downstream. (Overlander A. L. Fortune was astounded to find five or six hundred dogs at Fort Edmonton.) Hind's party played cricket outside the fort walls during breaks from buying supplies. Their main food purchases were quantities of flour at $3.90 for 112 pounds and pemmican at six cents a pound. Some admitted to participating in less exalted sporting escapades, but all duly went to church in that Victorian era when religion played a major role in Canadian life. Mr Corbett, Church of England minister, preached at the Court House specially for the miners though it was so hot that many left early. Some went that same night to hear the Rev. John Black preach a good Presbyterian (and presumably lengthy) sermon.

The various parties were not in agreement as to their course of action after leaving Fort Garry. The majority decided on a fast crossing to the Cariboo and formed one large group. But others were hopeful of gold closer at hand since the *Globe* had described an El Dorado of the precious metal which had been washed down from the mountains and lay in the prairie rivers. Redgrave, Alexander, Hind and other Torontonians elected to join a glib-talking Mr Love who declared emphatically that there was much gold in the Saskatchewan and other streams. This smaller group proposed to prospect on the prairies and if they found gold in paying quantities to winter at Edmonton rather than attempt the dangerous mountain crossing in autumn.

William George Richardson Hind, 'expedition artist', stalks like a ghostly figure through the pages of Canadian art history. There are but few published references to him. His paintings impressively document the Canadian scene from Atlantic to Pacific at a time when Canadians everywhere were curious about both their familiar surroundings and those vast unexplored regions to the north and west. His minutely detailed pictorial records characterize this inquisitive spirit. Born at Nottingham in

Drying meat in the rockies.

MCCORD MUSEUM, MONTREAL

1833, he had followed to Toronto his more famous brother, Henry Youle Hind, about 1852. For a few years he taught at the Toronto Normal School and entered his canvases in competition at the Upper Canada exhibitions. There they went more or less unnoticed among a grand conglomeration of false teeth and dozens of other extraneous objects grouped in the Fine Arts section. While not with Henry on the latter's expeditions to the Red River in 1857 or the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Rivers in 1858, William must have heard much about the western plains. William did accompany Henry on the Hind Labrador Expedition of 1861, bringing back a sheaf of sketches, and painting many finely finished watercolours which were lithographed as illustrations for the extensive report. The man had itchy feet and it is quite in character for him to join the Overlanders in 1862.

Hind's western pictures, of which the earliest was the Fort Garry view, are varied in character. His sketch book, measuring only 3½ by 6 inches, is filled with pencil and watercolour vignettes. On the first page, Overlanders in three Red River carts pass the walls of Fort Garry as they begin their trek (page 7). It concludes with sketches of the party in the mountains near Jasper. A group of larger watercolours are highly finished works. They show incidents and scenery from Fort Garry right to Victoria. Presumably they were based on the studies but none seems directly taken from the sketch book. He painted several oils in the Fort Garry district. Some of the Red River settlement in winter indicate a second visit. Others picture the country in spring between Fort Garry and White Horse Plains with little farm houses built of upright timber and small barns (page 5). While passing through this farming community, the Huntingdon men describe

> numerous herds of cattle . . . and some of the more impudent of the boys took the liberty of drawing 3 or 4 quarts of milk from some of the cows as none of us had had a drink of milk this season.

Other diarists prophetically looked at the rich farm lands, thinking of their potential for future settlement.

Richard Alexander states that his party started out from the general rendezvous at White Horse Plains on June 10th. The further week's delay there had been boring. Saturday night he, Hind, and another chap had 'got jolly tight' and missed church the next morning. The Toronto men and their companions had from fifty to a hundred Red River carts. The numbers kept changing as other men joined them or left to go their own way. The carts stretched out in a long snake-like line across the

boundless prairies. Thomas McMicking's larger group of some 138 including Mrs Schubert and her three children left a few days earlier. Daily routine was strenuous. Men normally woke at four, harnessed reluctant oxen to the carts, and were soon on the road. No travelling was done on Sunday.

Various diversions livened the journey. Hind was a keen hunter and he, with others, went duck hunting on several occasions. He sketched men plucking birds for the evening meal. Blue iris in some hunting views echo Redgrave's ecstasies about prairie flowers. Shortly after passing the Qu'Appelle Valley, he wrote that the party travelled through fifteen miles of beautiful woods which

> appeared like a fairy ground, here all sorts of flowers were in full blossom, the Wild Geranium, Ladys Slippers, Woodbine, Roses, Wild Mint & other sorts of different descriptions—also indeed the morning was so fine, the Sun just rising, the perfume of the wild flowers, the birds singing their cheerful notes . . . beautiful lakes here and there—with beautiful Water Lilys in and around them—Wild Gooseberry and Currant, also Cherry were in abundance (but not yet ripe) all of which tended to remind one of home. . . .

Redgrave gave several intimate sketches of camp life. There was a horse race and running and jumping matches one night before turning in. Men played cards, wrote letters home, and cut their hair, all of which occupations Hind sketched. Carts had to be mended, guns cleaned, and bread baked at each stop. One night a Métis joined the party and cooked a skunk; while in the morning there had been nothing but the smell of flowers, that night the skunk could be smelt a mile away. Redgrave declared Sunday to be a regular vanity fair for the men played dance tunes as well as hymns on the fiddle and *cornet-à-piston*. McMicking's party organized large musical groups. D. E. Prest wrote of them that on July 22nd at Edmonton

> While I sit and write the bones are sounding on one side, the fiddle on another, the Cornopean and Saric horn peal forth their notes together, with 12 or 14 of the best singers that I have ever heard.

The men were in Indian territory and 'the noise of all this together with the sight of so many pale-faced race, perfectly astonishes the redskins. . . .' But such music served to while away the evenings 'as merrilly and pleasant as though we had been in some grand concert hall, of the first fashion of modern times in an Eastern city.'

Camp life was not always comfortable. Mosquitoes were everywhere, and the only remedy was to sit in the smoke from the fire. Periodic thunderstorms on occasion upset many of the tents. Repeated rain posed a growing problem as they went westward. Just before they reached Edmonton the water rose four inches in the tents one night. Some slept on side boards of the Red River carts to keep dry, but one man said

> the 7 who slept in our tent cut small brush & built a pile 2 feet high, then lengthened the tent ropes & set the tent on top of the brush, we then spread the rubber blankets on that, then our buffalo robes on top of that & our blankets on top of all, &

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

Emigrant train crossing the prairie.

we sleep'd as gay as though we had been in French spring beds, in some City Hall; while most everybody Else found themselves aflote long before morning.

A philosophical Redgrave pointed out that the consolation for such inconveniences was good roads, no tollgates, and no taxes to pay.

Prairie rivers were formidable barriers for Red River carts. The first major obstacle came at Fort Ellice where the cart track crossed the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers just above their junction. This necessitated crossing both streams. Mr McKay, master of the dilapidated Fort Ellice which Overlanders reported due for imminent reconstruction, provided scows. These were attached to rawhide ropes which were strung across both streams. The Qu'Appelle River scow could carry only one ox and cart at a time, but a larger one on the Assiniboine could carry two. Prudent William McKay, with a sharp lookout for the 'bawbees', charged fifty cents a cart ferriage. Some parties struck north from here, going west by way of Forts Carlton and Pitt. Hind's group evidently took a more southerly route and reached the South Saskatchewan in the area of present Saskatoon on July 14th. There they had much trouble in getting the cavalcade down the steep banks. The river, which was a quarter-mile wide, was crossed in a 'bateau'. Wheels were removed, the dismantled carts piled into the boat and taken over one by one. Cattle and horses swam the river.

Those optimists who believed there was gold in the prairie streams, panned at each crossing. Love was one. Results were disappointing. He and Alexander stayed behind at Birdstail Creek on July 25th, found only a grain of gold in each pan, and had to race on horseback to catch the main body. They repeated the experience next day at Snake Creek. By July 1st most were convinced there was no paying gold in the Saskatchewan and that they should go through to the Cariboo that autumn. Love and a few others found traces of gold when they reached Edmonton and stubbornly remained there for the winter.

Buffalo hunts enlivened the trip as the parties neared Edmonton. These animals had vanished from the eastern prairies, but on July 7th south of Carlton House there were scattered skeletons. Actually Hind was by then in a quarrelsome mood, probably for lack of subjects to paint, and his tent-mates forced him out on the 10th. Redgrave took him in. The expected hordes of Blackfoot failed to materialize and Hind had to resort to sketching the occasional Cree. But his spirits revived when the party saw numerous buffalo on the 18th and he went out hunting. There was frying and cooking in camp until 11 p.m. after that first buffalo hunt although their only fuel was buffalo dung picked up on the prairies.

Repeatedly a delighted Hind sketched buffalo. One night while camping they saw a mirage with a large herd of buffalo in the distance (page 5). Redgrave and a friend, Sutherland, killed a large bull on the 19th but did not know how to cut it up and took out only the tongue. Hind sketched more proficient men skinning animals. The meat was tough and lean at that season and best cooked as a concoction of soup and flour to which the Indians gave the name *Neeshac be-boop*. One day Redgrave chased a cow into a large herd and was startled to find such masses of buffalo on all sides that he appeared to be on a moving plain. On the 22nd, the Overlanders killed so many that they were unable to resist thoughts of a real feast for lack of good fuel so Hind donated his 'old box' for the purpose. It was split up and they cooked a superb dinner. 'Did we not have a feed—beefsteak, pancakes, bread, huckleberry pudding and tea.' Presumably Hind's donation healed the rupture.

Heavy rains raised the level of even the smallest streams as they neared Edmonton. Men built bridges when the water was more than four feet deep, otherwise they plunged bodily into the icy water, testing the solidity and depth of the bottom before driving the oxen and carts into the stream. Each crossing was dreaded. Muddy banks caused many carts to upset. Men hung to the backs of carts to prevent a too-rapid descent, and helped the oxen by pushing carts up the steep opposite ascent. Horses swam the swollen Vermilion Creek. The men made a raft by lashing two cart wheels together and stretched tents and waterproofs under them. Two men swam over with a line and hauled the improvised boat back and forth until everything was ferried over.

The first Overlanders, several days in advance of Hind's party, reached Edmonton on July 22nd. The Company men raised a Union Jack over the fort on the opposite shore and fired a cannon in salute. The gold-seekers replied by raising the English standard carried by the Ottawa men and fired 21 rounds with their rifles. The flooding Saskatchewan had swept downstream the ferry boat used by the Hudson's Bay Company. Two keepers and the Rev. Thomas Woolsey, Methodist missionary, came across in a pemmican trough as an improvised boat. Later that day, regular ferry service was resumed and the men crossed and camped on the opposite shore.

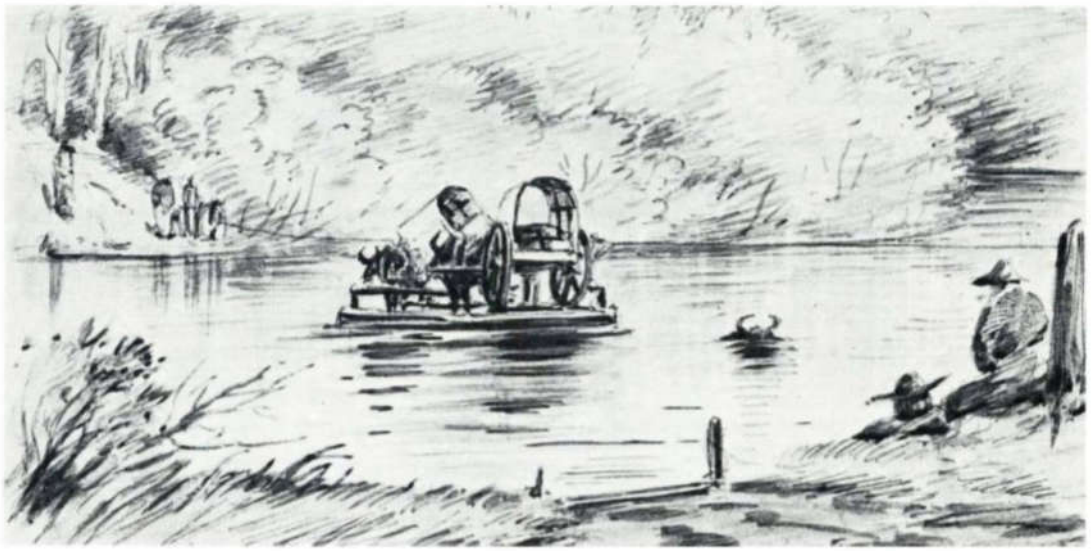
J. E. Brazeau, temporarily in command of Fort Edmonton, gave the first party a cordial reception. William Phillips, writing years later of the trip, remembered nostalgically the kindly Orkney men employed there. Although he wrote that it had been at Fort Pitt, obviously he meant Fort Edmonton when he said the Overlanders

met with a cordial reception from the factor who was a Frenchman of the jolliest kind. He placed a large room at our disposal,

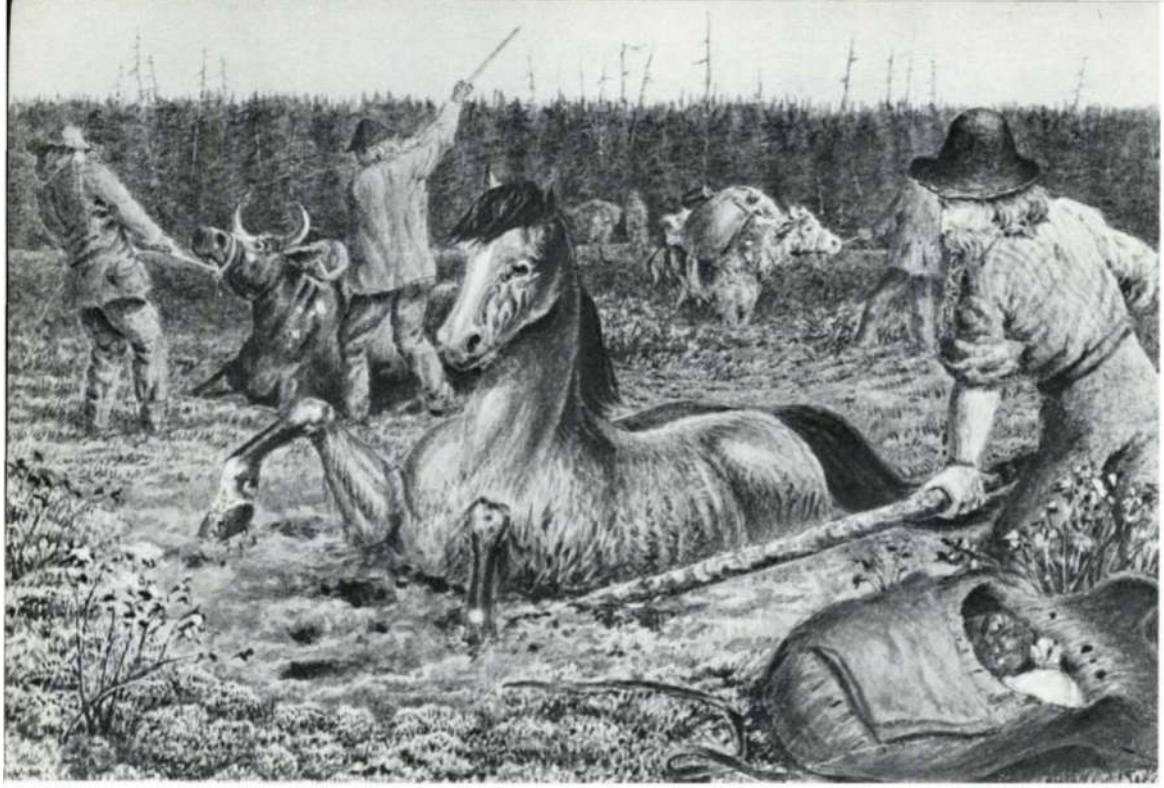
Jones and Carpenter playing cards.

ALL DRAWINGS FROM THE SKETCHBOOK IN THE PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

Overlanders camp in a thunderstorm.



Scow ferry on the Assiniboine and, below, an upset cart.



Muskeg near the Pembina River west of Edmonton.

MCCORD MUSEUM, MONTREAL

and lighting it up with tallow candles and summoning our musicians and rounding up the half-breed girls and squaws, we had a livelier dance than David had before the Ark.

Another party was held a few days later when the Hind group arrived. Of that same room, Paul Kane had noted fifteen years earlier that the elaborate murals were *not* suitable designs for the Vatican. It was the scene of innumerable merry parties for voyageurs throughout the years. There had been two memorable nights experienced by the first group to arrive which Hind missed when Indians and half-breeds surrounded their camp, singing, drum beating, dancing Indian style, and demonstrating a war dance.

Future western settlement was uppermost in the minds of some more serious easterners who had lived on farms. McMicking was told that the Company had reaped 400 bushels of wheat from a ten-acre field, and that was after repeatedly cropping the same spot for thirty years. But the Company had only a small windmill to grind the flour which was of poor quality. The frustrated factor was even then writing to the head office in London seeking permission to build a better mill. Those Overlanders who thought about settlement finally declared that the isolation could not be compensated for by a gift of 10,000 acres of prairie.

One feels in reading the diaries that up to this point, the journey had been something of a grand adventure despite occasional trying experiences. But there was an abrupt change. The cart track virtually ended at Fort Edmonton and thereafter the men were forced to go by foot or on horseback. All Red River carts and surplus baggage were sold. So many carts were offered to the factor at Fort Edmonton that the price dropped from $10 to $5 each although when Hind arrived prices had strengthened. The first arrivals had the pick of available horses. Some men, turning their oxen into beasts of burden, put packs on their back. Surplus clothing was bartered with the Indians to cut down weight. One man traded a half-worn fancy coloured neck tie for three pairs of ornamented deerskin moccasins. Alexander organized a public auction of his surplus.

The Hudson's Bay Company officials advised against such a foolhardy escapade as an autumn crossing of the mountains by so many men. The Overlanders refused to listen. A first group of 125 struck out for Jasper, the Leather Pass (Yellowhead), and the headwaters of the Fraser River. Other groups followed. Hind left Edmonton on August 12th. Redgrave, who was with him, found the new method of travel a particular abomination. He carried a fifty-pound pack on his back, over one shoulder a shovel on which he slung a large cooking kettle, and with the other hand led the most stubborn of oxen. The ox was not used to a pack on his back and objected violently. First it broke one strap, then another, sent plates, knives and forks flying in the air, and spilt flour on the ground. Redgrave declared that it took two men and a boy to even put the pack on its back, that the escapade put the watchers into fits of laughter, and the performance of Richard III or Hamlet's Ghost was nothing to that of the ox. He determined on lightening his load when he reached the new settlement of St Albert. He was even more sorry for himself when he limped into St Ann's three days later, despite the hearty welcome of two priests, three friendly nuns from Montreal, and an assortment of Métis and Indians. That night he bartered his scarf for two ten-pound whitefish, his tie for a bushel of potatoes, and he slept on his 20-pound bag of pemmican to keep

the dogs from stealing it. The next day, Indians dressed in the new finery which he had given them, strutted about like a 'Broad Street Swell'.

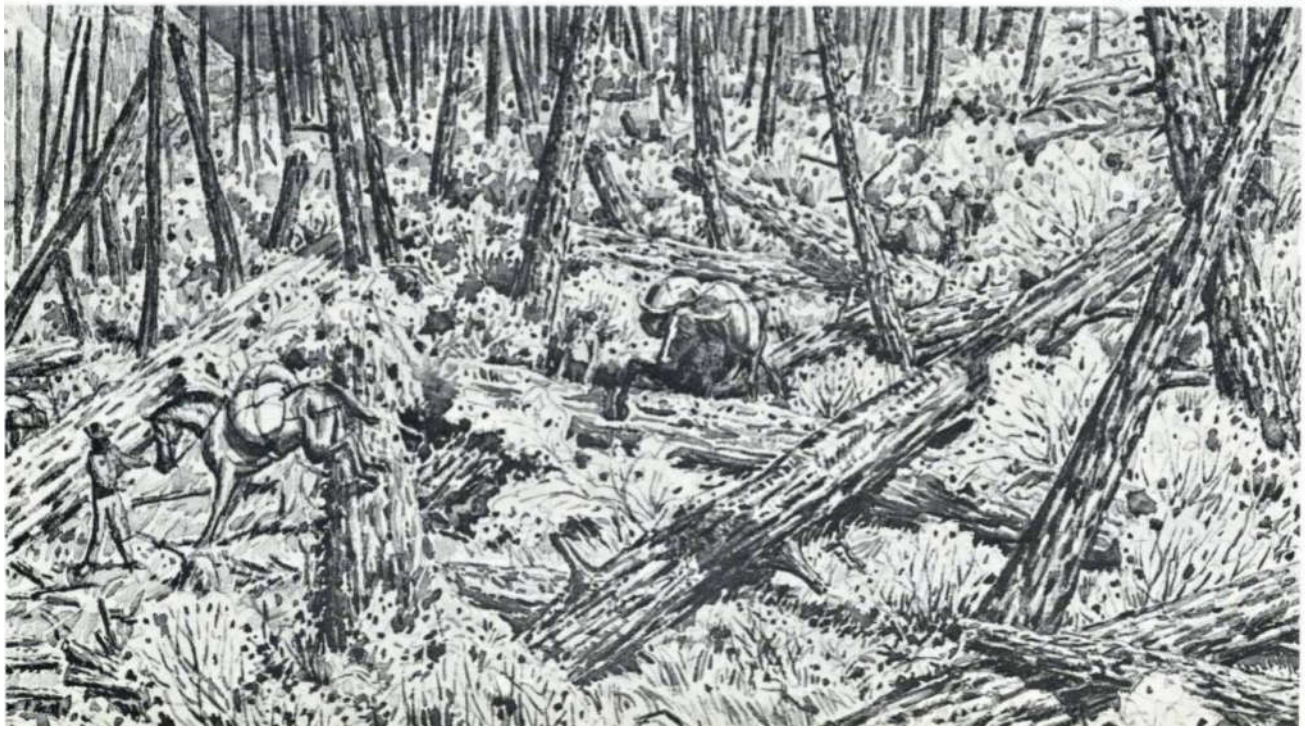
The Overlanders were always unfortunate in choice of guides. An unreliable one from Edmonton travelled in the rear of the party and did nothing to improve the more difficult travelling beyond St Ann's. Men were beginning to have fear of real hunger before reaching the Cariboo. The guide's appetite was enormous and the men declared he 'could have eaten a donkey in a few meals'. Coal from deposits near the Pembina River provided glowing camp fires at that stage. Some men went to investigate smoke that came from fires burning deep underground in coal seams. The Pembina River crossing, on a frosty day in early August, was a bad one. Some finally improvised 'boats' from tents for their baggage; others forded the stream on horse-back, their packs held high to keep them dry. One rode an ox, and one horse carrying a man and his friend on its back, stumbled and both had a merry ducking.

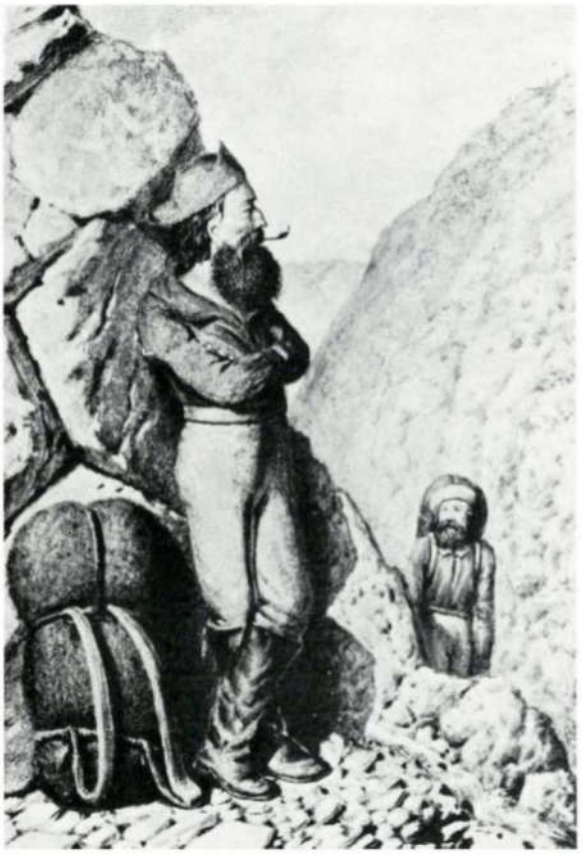
An interminable swamp beyond the Pembina River was so big that the whole train could have mired in this muskeg at once. Men carried packs on their backs, and as more and more horses went through, the quagmire became worse. Horses were down constantly, had to be pried out, and kicked the men in their struggles. From this they passed into a dense spruce, pine and poplar forest where the first men had to cut a crude trail. Here they found the grave of James McKerly (or Mokerty, the name scratched on a tree) who had died there two years earlier and it served as a grim reminder of the wilderness hazards. There was fear of grizzly bears. The McLeod River was chilled by melt-water from glaciers. But some men caught splendid trout for a tasty supper. Others met Métis travelling from Jasper House to Fort Edmonton who sold them some fresh mountain-sheep meat. Ahead rose a particularly striking hill which they dubbed Edinburgh Castle because of its shape. After rounding it, Hind decided to kill his ox because it had become so difficult to drive. Others helped him cut the meat into strips and dry it in Indian fashion before the fire since salt was in short supply (page 8). At intervals others did the same as they continued further into the mountains.

The high peaks required strong nerves. Their next objective, Tête Jaune Cache, lay over a particularly high ridge. The path narrowed approaching the top, a perpendicular rock wall on one side and a several-hundred-foot precipice on the other. From the top they could see Jasper House, no larger than a 'hen-coop,' and 'a perfect picture of loneliness and solitude'. They passed the ruins of Henry's House, a trading post abandoned by the Company years earlier. Shortly after they reached the Miette River which they crossed and re-crossed many times. Food for even the oxen was becoming impossible to obtain. One group of men rationed themselves to a pint of pemmican soup a day and a carrion crow divided among four men. Plentiful huckleberries and two red squirrels helped out. The men were worried when they found their horses bleeding at the mouth. Yet finally they were through the Yellowhead Pass and beyond the continental divide they crossed the mighty Fraser at a single step. They followed the river to the anticipated Cache.

The Overlanders began the final stage in their continental crossing at Tête Jaune. Most proposed to descend the turbulent Fraser in which three of their number would eventually drown. A few, including Mrs Schubert and her children, elected to go across country to the Thompson River route. The first objective down the Fraser was the Company post at Fort George midway to Fort Alexandria in the very heart of the mining country. Since the Fraser was navigable beyond the Cache, some parties built canoes and others cedar and spruce log rafts measuring forty by eighteen feet. Scarcity of tools meant

Packtrain in the forest. MCCORD MUSEUM, MONTREAL





In the Leather (Yellowhead) Pass. B.C. ARCHIVES

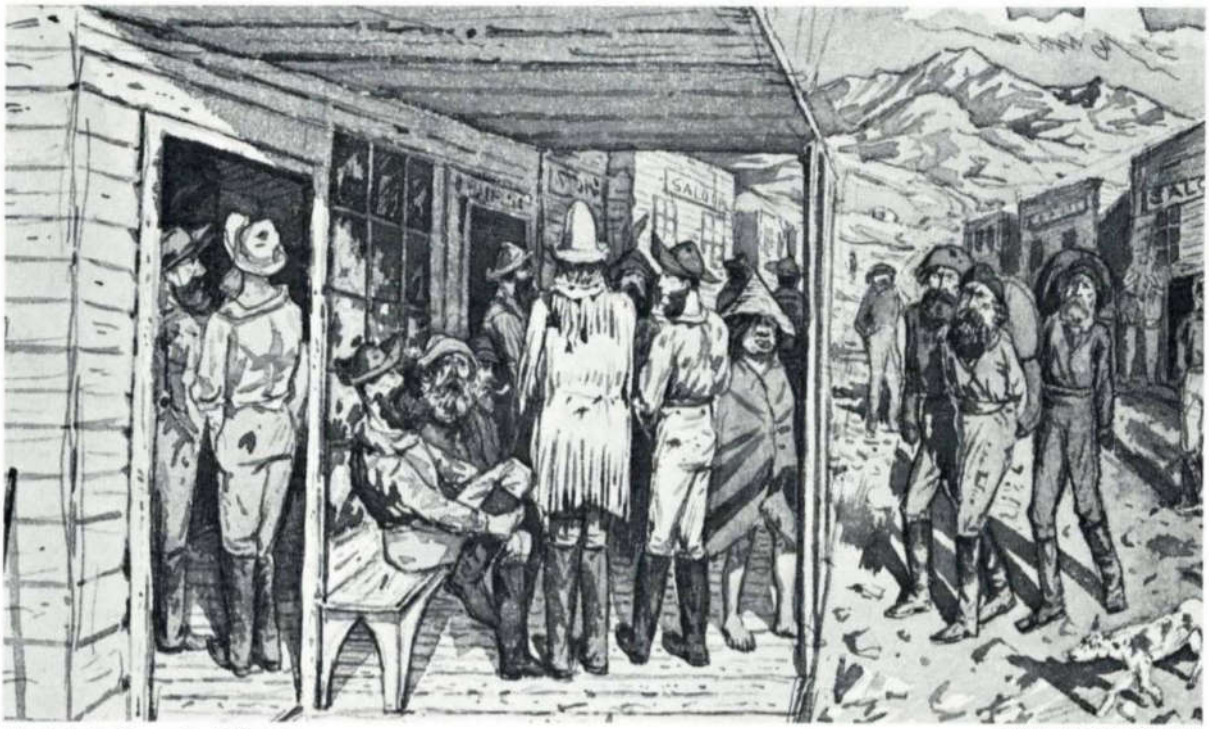
that only part of the group could work on construction at one time. Idle hands traded with the local Shuswap Indians, securing dried berry cakes and salmon weighing from forty to sixty pounds. The first Overlanders left Tête Jaune Cache down the Fraser on September 1st. Alexander and the Toronto men were there until the 20th. They expected to reach the Cariboo in five days but did not arrive at Alexandria until October 17th. There are no references to Hind during the Fraser River descent. No sketches survive of the harrowing and picturesque rapids whose roar, hidden rocks and violent swirls in the gorges terrorized the men in their frail canoes and unwieldy rafts on which the remaining oxen were tied. Alexander saw one disaster. He had been travelling in the same canoe as Carpenter but changed to a different craft. Shortly after, Carpenter's canoe entered a rapid and was swamped. One man noticed that Carpenter was writing something minutes before. A note was found in his pocket when his body was recovered downstream. He had a premonition of disaster and had written: 'Arrived at the first rapid of the Fraser River on Sept. 30th and was drowned. May God have mercy on my poor wife.'

Another party found two men whose canoe was lost two days earlier and a third occupant drowned. They were stranded on a rocky island in most severe weather. Eustache Patterson, one of them, was taken to Fort George where he died the next day and was buried in a canoe since no coffin boards were obtainable. Hind sketched one burial along the Fraser, probably that of Carpenter since he was with the Toronto men. A group of men cluster around a new grave, a wooden cross is at the head, and evergreens above.

Further provisioning was needed for the run from Fort George to Quesnel Forks and Fort Alexandria. Winter supplies had not yet reached the fort, which consisted of a single house and some Indian shanties. Alexander was astonished at the smallness of the world when he discovered that Mr Charles, the factor, had studied under a Mr Trotter at the Musselburgh boarding school outside of Edinburgh, a man who had subsequently been Alexander's own teacher. The adventurers whose money had been spent in the long crossing felt that prices were high. The factor gave them two bushels of potatoes, a beaver, and six salmon for a gun. Carpenter's revolver and $5 were exchanged for a canoe that one man needed.

Rapids below Fort George terrified the men (who were now suffering from dysentery) even more than those above. Some hired Indians to take their canoes through, and others tried walking along the banks but found them impossibly steep and rocky. Just below the fort they met their first gold miners, Chinese working rockers at a bar and making $2 to $5 a day each. Hind stopped to sketch them. Thereafter every three or four miles were other parties of miners at work. At Fort Alexandria below Quesnel Forks they had reached the very centre of gold rush activity with 'an awful lot of gambling', no difference between Saturday and Sunday, and the atmosphere that of a veritable Babel which amazed the conservative easterners. At one place they found a steamboat under construction, and the new roads to the Cariboo they considered a marvellous engineering feat. Kindly men provided meals to destitute Overlanders without question when they said they were hungry. Oxen from the rafts sold for from $70 to $80 each at Quesnel, one raft sold for $25 to a miner who wanted to erect a winter house, and a tent brought $10. Everyone hunted for work to tide them over the first difficult period in the country. McMicking noted that he had spent $97.65 in crossing from his home at Queenston, Ontario, and had travelled a total of 3,547 miles in reaching the Cariboo.

Few Overlanders mined gold seriously. That winter Alexander cut timber at New Westminster where he lived in a shack built by himself and where Hind sketched him. His friend, Harry, worked as a hotel waiter at Williams Lake for $30 a month. Some returned home by way of Panama the next spring. Ellis, one of these, took with him Hind's sketch book which pictured the prairie phase of the crossing. Redgrave did some mining but was happier when appointed sheriff at Kootenay. Disillusioned D. E. Prest wrote to his brother at Christmas, describing how he had prospected a potential quartz discovery which was a humbug—he found no more gold in it than in the rocks around Queenston. Most had similar



The Main Street in Lillooet. MCCORD MUSEUM, MONTREAL

experiences. In fact Prest wrote that only one Overlander, Ephraim Harper, struck it rich that autumn.

William Hind scorned the labours of gold mining. He made a tourist's dash around the Cariboo immediately after his arrival. He sketched the main street of Lillooet with its miners, saloons, and an inevitable dog (he wrote on the reverse of the sketch above, 'I hate dogs!'). He recorded interiors of saloons with the down-and-outs sleeping on the floor and resting their heads on their packs, the successful drinking gleefully, and the callow beardless youths and old toughs from many countries. He went to the rugged mining districts where donkeys carried heavier goods, and miners clambered up mountain streams with packs on their backs, stopping to pan for gold at likely spots. He joined the inevitable camp-fire groups at night. There a despondent note normally reigned at lack of gold that day, but with a despairing hope for better luck on the following one. Hind visited the California gold fields with some Overlanders that winter to sketch miners at San Francisco. Three years later he was living in Victoria where his most expensive purchases according to his account books were bottles of gin. There he painted views of the young city, Indians digging for clams on local beaches, and landscapes of the colony which a lecturer proposed taking to England as illustrative material. Like others, he returned east. Years later he was working for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia railway companies. He was still recording in water-colour other phases of the Canadian mosaic in the early days of Confederation. When he died at Sussex, N.B., in 1889, *The King's County Record* published a thumbnail sketch of the man. It described him as well informed, a good talker when he felt like it, and having 'grand and occasionally eccentric habits'. ◆

This article is based principally on copies of diaries and reminiscences of the Overlanders in the Archives of British Columbia. Hind's sketches and paintings of the Overlander expedition to which reference is made are in the same archives, the McCord Museum of McGill University, the Public Archives of Canada, and the Toronto Public Library. The most complete and authoritative account of the expedition is: M. S. Wade, *The Overlanders of '62*, Victoria, 1931.

Panning gold in the Cariboo (detail). B.C. ARCHIVES

The Miniatures of Bobby Takrik

BY DAVID F. RAINE

BOBBY TAKRIK is in his late forties, a carver and an Eskimo. He is unusual for an Eskimo in that he is a man of large stature; so tall that he is obliged to duck his head when he goes through a doorway. His hands are also big and quite out of keeping with the incredibly detailed miniatures which he carves out of soapstone.

Born in a remote camp just outside the Arctic Quebec settlement of Sugluk, Bobby's childhood was lived in the traditional way. It was a life which demanded enough skill at hunting to enable him and his family to eat, be clothed, and survive. In the land of his youth the soil is permanently frozen; the shores are banked with icebergs and the sea is frozen for much of the year. It is a treeless place where lichens and mosses fight for existence beneath snow and ice.

Here Takrik learnt to harpoon seals, to track wolves and bears, and to drive a dog-team. It was a hard life a decade before the culture of southern Canada offered its security and its complications to this part of the Arctic.

Takrik is married to Toonoo. They have two grown sons and a daughter, Mosesee, Iaituk, and Elisapee, and a younger daughter who is only four years old, named Seasie.

In September of 1968, the family decided to leave Sugluk and move farther north. By that time Takrik had become well known as a carver and he realized that there would be a bigger market for his work if he were to move to Cape Dorset, on Baffin Island. Previously, he had been selling his carvings through the small co-operative store at Povungnetuk. Cape Dorset had become a centre for Eskimo art and many of the more famous Eskimos live there.

With twenty-six others, Bobby Takrik left Sugluk and sailed along the coast to Ivugivik. There the party bade farewell to other members of the Tayarak band, then set out across Hudson Strait. After stopping at Nottingham and Salisbury Islands, their vessel finally drifted into the shallow waters of Cape Dorset; it had been an arduous journey, lasting some twenty-three days in an open boat.

Initially, Takrik made his home with another family from Sugluk, but after a few months he was able to move into a house of his own. It is a small, prefabricated building with two bedrooms and a combined kitchen and

The photographs show carvings in approximately actual size.

dining-room. Like most other Eskimos, Bobby has virtually no furnishings, preferring to sit, eat, and sleep on the bare wooden floors, a legacy of the time when his people lived in snowhouses or tents and had no other alternative. There is a primitive washroom in one corner of the house and a tall polythene water container in another. It is in the container that blocks of ice are melted into water which is used for drinking and washing. The rooms are kept warm by an oil-fed heater; lighting is from a hurricane lamp which dangles freely from the ceiling of the main room.

The outside of the building is banked with snow, also with blocks and chips of green, grey, and black soapstone purchased from the local co-operative store. The men of the community gather the rock during the summer months from an outcrop roughly 40 miles along the coast. Enough is kept in store for the carvers to purchase according to their individual needs throughout the year.

Takrik's artistic ability was being discussed shortly after he first arrived and the prominent resident carvers began to saunter past him as he worked in order to see for themselves just what his reputation was all about. Everyone agreed that here was a talented man who, although speaking in a different dialect, was worthy of recognition and acceptance into their own select ranks. From that moment on, he lived and worked in an atmosphere of respect.

Although his sculptures vary in size, his best work is expressed through the miniatures which have gained him fame. These rarely exceed a height of two inches and invariably show some aspect of the traditional culture and the endurance of the men who were part of it. His work, therefore, is important not only for the unique skill of the artist but also because his carvings record a rapidly vanishing way of life.

Watching this man at work is an enriching experience; the way in which his long fingers toy with often only one cubic inch of stone, manipulate it, file it, and produce some detailed form is an amazing sight.

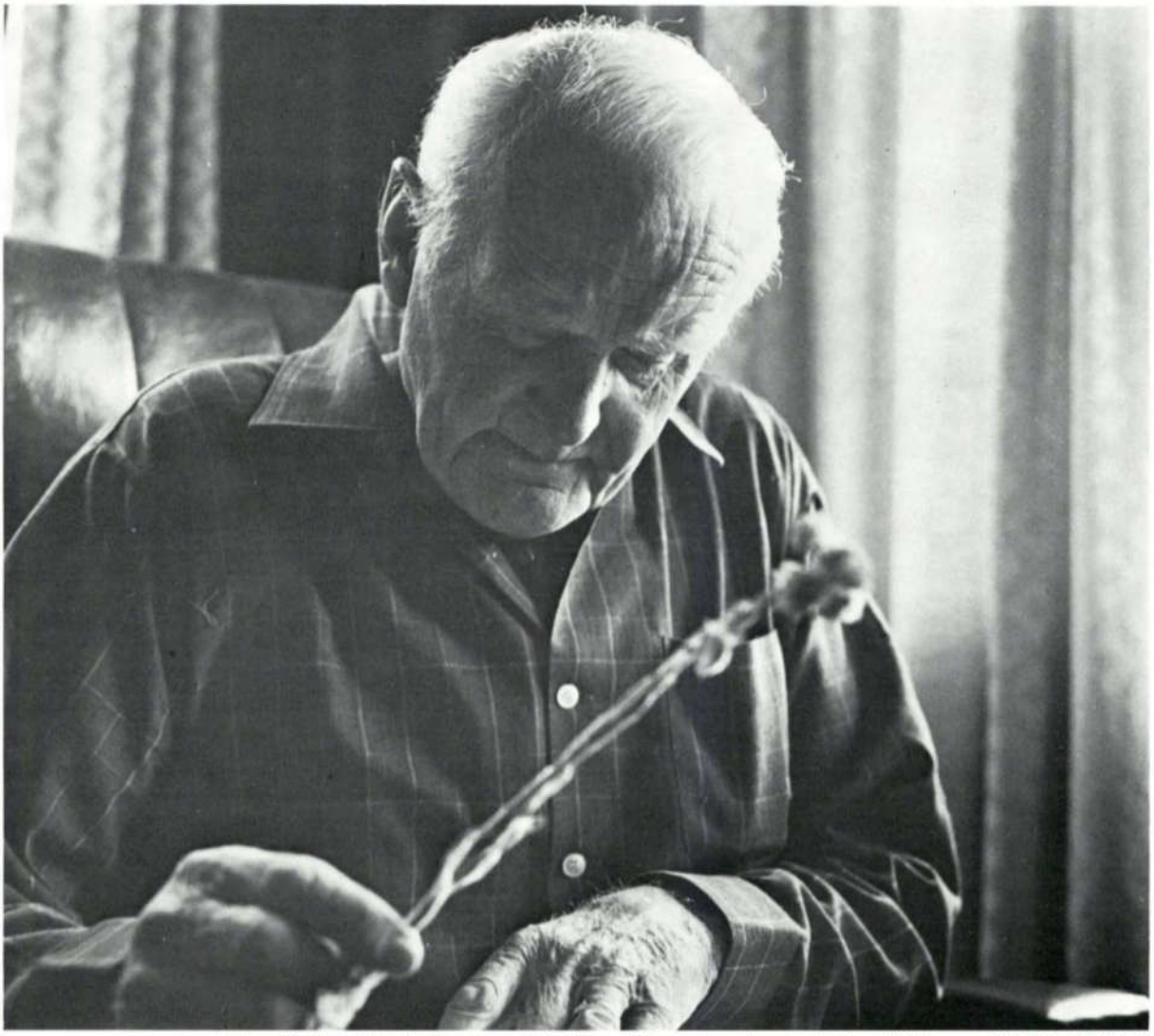
He chooses the stone carefully, taking note of the cleavage of the rock and scanning its surface for possible lines of weakness within its crystalline structure. Then he studies it; tossing and turning it beneath his ever watchful eyes until the rock itself suggests a likely form. Once the idea has settled, Bobby quickly goes to work. File in hand, he strokes and caresses the rock, each push of the tool cautiously deliberate and calculated, for in such small work there can be no room for error.

Literally within a few minutes the crude shape of a man is apparent; the pointed hood of an Eskimo rising from the hunched back of a squatting figure. At this stage, he changes to a pocketknife, quickly scraping the surfaces until minute folds appear in the parka and pants. He cuts a maze of narrow lines, so that the arms and legs assume natural proportions; with taps on the blade at strategic points in the stone, boots, hands and even fingers grow into the rock. Then, using the same knife, he begins to excavate a series of holes until the observer becomes aware of the negative space between arms and legs, or the gap between the knee of a hunter and his captured seal.

It takes Bobby virtually an hour to complete this basic work, after which he takes a piece of wire-wool and proceeds to smooth the figure until the file marks have disappeared and other microscopic blemishes have completely gone. All the time, the stone is clutched by a hooked thumb and held fast against the palm; his right hand works nimbly, whilst the fingers of his left hand jostle the stone into the various positions required.

As a final touch, the eyes and mouth are carefully etched into the face. The entire carving, from start to finish, usually takes about two hours for a single figure and the object is generally polished to a shining surface using the pure talc powder which the filing has produced.

Takrik is aware that he would reap greater financial rewards by concentrating on larger blocks of stone and bigger subjects but he is happier when he is working on miniatures as he creates a permanent record of his dying culture. ◆



Robert T. Porsild checks a wayside flower, 'Senecio yukonensis Porsildii', named for his brother, Dr A. E. Porsild, retired Dominion Botanist.

RICHARD HARRINGTON

BOTANY BOB

By Lyn Harrington

Mrs Harrington and her photographer husband have travelled widely in the Yukon and throughout the world.

LIFE HAS COME full circle for Robert Thorbjorn Porsild now of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. He came to Canada from Greenland as a botanist in 1926, quit seven years later, and returned to the profession five years ago. 'Botany Bob' has not forgotten his old learning, and is adding to our botanic knowledge. Yukon Territory boasts some 830 species of plants.

Porsild's collecting fills gaps in Ottawa's National Museum of Natural Sciences, and blank spaces on the botanical map. He has even discovered two brand-new grasses. He says, 'Sometimes plants look so much alike you can't tell they are different until a specialist in that species counts the chromosomes. Each species has a different count, you know'.

Botany runs in the Porsild family. Bob's younger brother Erling, Dr A. E. Porsild of Ottawa, after retiring as Dominion Botanist continues on at the Museum as Curator Emeritus. Both learnt botany at their father's

knee. Bob was only eight and Erling six when the family moved from Copenhagen to Godhavn, Greenland, in 1906.

Dr Morten Pedersen Porsild founded, and for over three decades directed, the Arctic Station on Disko Island. One of its objectives was to train young scientists in arctic exploration and research. Dr Porsild started with his own youngsters. He taught them their usual lessons, heavily larded with botanical and anthropological lore. After lessons, the boys ran loose—searching for specimens. Their heroes in those days were two fellows about ten years older than Robert—'Big Peter' Freuchen and 'Little Knud' Rasmussen.

In 1926 Robert and Erling Porsild were invited by the Dominion government to report on vegetation in Canada's far northwest. Reindeer herds were to be driven overland from Nome, Alaska, and the government had to know in advance where the best forage was to be found.

Here the Eskimo language learnt in boyhood ('through our ears, not on paper') stood the brothers in good stead in Alaska and northwest Canada. 'The nouns are the same, though the build-up of the words is a little different.' Porsild sighs, 'My Eskimo is slipping now because I don't use it any more.'

It was sufficiently good then to astonish the Alaskan Eskimos. How could white men speak it so well, even though the inflection was different? Then they announced their conclusion, 'Him halfbreed!'

The Porsilds started from Nome, Alaska, and in three summers worked their way east to the Mackenzie River delta, where the reindeer eventually were established on Richards Island. They collected plants all the way.

'We brought out more than 16,000 specimens. Erling stayed with the reindeer project until 1937, when he was appointed Dominion Botanist. I stuck it out until 1933. I wanted to get married, and figured that botany was no way to get rich.' His deep-set Scandinavian blue eyes twinkle under heavy brows. 'I worked at all kinds of jobs—prospected, trapped, cut wood, built cabins . . . Why, I even left Yukon for eighteen months! Vancouver was too much for me, I can't stand cities.'

Robert Porsild found his niche when he built a handsome complex of log buildings at Johnson's Crossing of the Teslin River at Mile 837 on the Alaska Highway. Much of the Lodge's success was due to the energy and good taste of his wife Elly, who has helped in every enterprise. After nineteen years, they sold the property to their daughter and son-in-law.

Porsild retired in 1966, and wondered how he would put in his time usefully. The answer came promptly from the Dominion Botanist. 'Collect plants for the National Museum. You're a trained botanist, and can't have forgotten all you knew. There's that area in central Yukon no one has been able to get into until now. We haven't much money, and it will cost us less to hire you than to send someone out from here.'

Bob's retirement dovetailed neatly with the extension of the Dempster Highway in central Yukon. This lonely 'road to resources' penetrates 87 miles north of the Klondike Road through the Ogilvie Mountains. It will eventually curve eastward to Fort McPherson in the Northwest Territories.

'That's pretty country up there, quite changeable with wide valleys and sharp-edged white limestone mountains. It's a dead-end road with only a little hunting, fishing, and mining, but hardly any traffic yet. And it's good country for botanizing. The Ogilvies were not glaciated, you see. Plants grow there that won't grow in the siltbanks of lower altitudes. And the climate is different. Yukon averages only eight inches of rain, which is almost desert conditions.'

Bob and Elly Porsild loaded their new Alaska camper for the jaunt up the Dempster Highway, three summers in succession. The expeditions were successful beyond expectation, for they found fifty species formerly unknown in the region. Some of these were collected ten miles beyond the end of the official road ('pretty hard on equipment!') and up to 6,500 feet in the Ogilvies.

'Plants have a way of leaping some logical area. Or it might be they simply haven't been recorded there yet. For instance, a yellow *Draba siberica* is now in process of invading the country, probably came over on the ancient landbridge.'

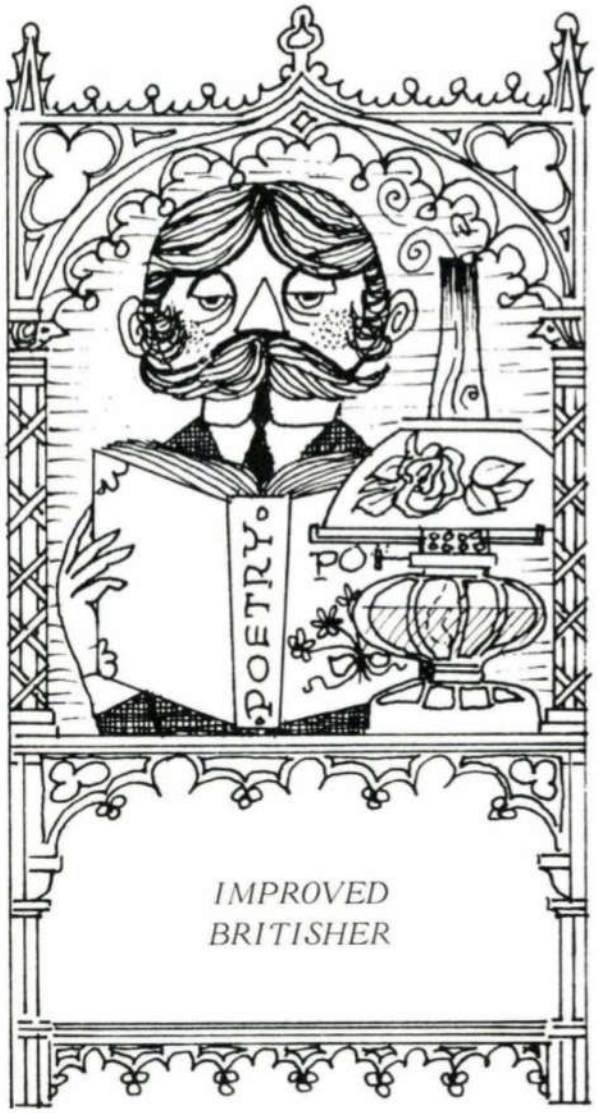
They found an eight-inch butterwort with the same purple flower and light-green basal leaves as its two-inch cousin farther south. Porsild located two new species of *Taraxacum* (dandelion) plus an extremely rare pink dandelion *carneocoloratum*, also reported from Alaska.

'In two summers, my wife and I collected 464 different species, four to twenty specimens of each. The largest numbers, of course, were of species somewhat out of the ordinary. The extra sets are used for exchange with museums and universities in northern countries of Scandinavia, the Soviet Union, and Alaska. Sometimes we could collect ripe seed from rare species, and these were sprouted under controlled conditions in Ottawa, and the chromosomes counted.'

Among the 830 plants known in Yukon, 250 are grasses, Porsild's special interest; of these, 120 belong to the *Carex* (sedgegrass), and 22 to the *Juncus* (rush) family. There are 19 *Antennaria* (pussytoes), numerous *Senecio* (groundsel). Hosts of wayside flowers garnish the highways in Yukon, especially the fireweed ranging from pure white to pale pink, magenta, and carmine.

Porsild presses each specimen between sheets of corrugated cardboard bolted between hardwood slats. Some dry in a day in Yukon's arid climate, though succulents take much longer.

In an access of penny-pinching, Ottawa sliced the small 'occasional' fund from the National Museum's budget. Yet Bob Porsild keeps on collecting. In 1969 his shipment comprised 34 new sets, and in 1970 he continued to gather and send in specimens. It seems that once the botany bug bites, the infection goes deep. ◆



CANADI

By John Orrell

IMAGINE THAT YOU are reading a sea story, in Melville perhaps, or even something about Hornblower. At a crucial moment in the fracas between two ocean-going vessels you find that you need to know how a schooner is rigged. You can't remember, it's vital to the story, and the author doesn't tell you. So you reach for the dictionary, flip the pages over to S, and run your eye down the column.

SCHISM, SCHNAPPS, SCHOOL, SCHOOLABLE. Liable by age, etc., it says, to compulsory education. SCHOONER noun. Here it is. And now suppose that you read on and find this definition of the word:

> SCHOONER: a big beer. A remittance man, in reply to the anxious enquiries of his friends, wrote home that he was now engaged in unloading schooners, and the pater wrote back expressing his joy at hearing that his offspring had at last turned his attention to serious work, however laborious. An extra remittance accompanied the pater's letter, and the scion of a noble house proceeded to unload more schooners.

You are, of course, none the wiser about the fore-and-aft rigging of schooners. Your dictionary obviously isn't much good; not, at least, by the normal standards of dictionaries. And plainly it's no deck-hand's handbook. You turn the pages, and your eye settles on a word among the G's—GOAT, reads the entry: to get someone's goat. And then it goes on:

> Mary had a little lamb,
> Which often was contrary;
> It followed her to school one day—
> "That gets my goat," said Mary.

If this is what you read, then the book that you have in your hand is John Sandilands' Canadian Dictionary, Stampede Edition, brought out in Winnipeg in 1912 and clearly aimed at the immigrant trade. The title-page—the one that librarians take notice of—says importantly: *Western Canadian Dictionary and Phrase Book. Things a Newcomer Wants to Know.* Underneath, in capitals: WORDS THAT ARE DIFFERENT. Then, in very small print, as if to anticipate somebody's querulous objection: 'Where they are not different, the meaning here attached is that which is accentuated in Canada. Where, however, both words and meaning are alike, "there's a reason" for their inclusion.'

ANISMS

Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Alberta

What that reason is, the editor and publisher doesn't say. Never mind: the cover has already made promises that suggest such reasons may be plausible, even if they are also unspeakable. On yellow paper, and accompanied by a photograph of a cowboy being tossed by a horse, it reads: *The Famous Slang Dictionary. Stampede Edition. Picturesque Language of the Cowboy and Bronco-Buster.* And for a blurb there is a critical comment on the first edition, reprinted from Bob Edwards' Calgary newspaper, *The Eye Opener*, approving the fact that among the dictionary's original entries is the phrase BS. The price is quoted as Two Bits, One Shinplaster or 25 cents.

The previous edition of the dictionary to which Bob Edwards refers had been published the year before and was an altogether plainer, more businesslike piece of work. Its cover was unadorned buff, and its promises, though extreme enough, were more pragmatic. It claimed to be the *First Dictionary Ever Printed in Canada*, 'Explaining in Plain English, for the Special Benefit of Newcomers, the Meaning of the Most Common Canadianisms and Colloquialisms'. There are few of the colourful verse illustrations, and scarcely any anecdotes. Instead there is a careful helpfulness, a steady determination to include all the most useful terms of trade and business that would, says the editor in his preface, be 'unknown in the Old Country and in old lands, expressions which the newcomer is up against the moment he lands in the Dominion, and which heretofore he could only fathom by much questioning and consequent betrayal of the fact that he had just blown in'.

Perhaps aware of a certain earnestness in the tone of his little book, Sandilands invites criticisms and contributions for the next edition: 'A one-cent postcard can contain quite a number of words and phrases and their meaning.' Whether it was the postcards that brought them, or some more intimate muse, there are any number of improvements in the second, enlarged, edition.

Take the verb lam, for instance. 'LAM: to hit, strike, lay out.' So far so good. Then, in a fashion more appealing than weightier works, the Slang Dictionary quotes a typical usage:

Every time I go to school
The teacher lams me with a rule
Makes no diff'rence if I *am* a fool
She's gotta quit lamin' me with a rule!

Some of the entries have a certain cultural interest. 'IMPROVED BRITISHER: a person born in the Old Country, but of long residence in Canada. Generally so described as a naive compliment to this Dominion.'

Or take the phrase OUT OF SIGHT: 'May be given,' says Sandilands, 'as a reply to an enquiry as to the state of one's health, suggesting that the person is in such good form that he could leap up into the clouds, out of sight. A story is told of a Scotsman who heard the reply for the first time, and determined to work it off at the earliest opportunity. He, however, met too suddenly an Irish friend, who asked after his health, and the nearest he could get to the Canadian reply was, 'Oh, I can't be seen.' The Irishman marvelled at this new-found Canadianism, and in his turn tried to store it up for the first favourable opportunity. But his memory was as defective as that of the Scotsman, and when next a friend asked him about his health all that he could remember by way of reply was, "Och, be jabers, Oi'm hidin"!'

At times, one can detect a personal element in the Sandilands Dictionary. Obviously he's a jovial fellow, this man, a good sort, full of stories. So there's something sad about his account of the phrase NOTHING DOING:

> —an expression that has become a by-word. It has become a denial and a refusal in all sorts of circumstances, and even if you tell your choicest story, an unappreciative listener may mutter 'nothing doing' and pass on. He means there's nothing doing in the smiling line.

But if on occasion he can be depressed, Sandilands is usually on top of the world. He loves the West, and boosts it for all he is worth:

> BOOST: to laud, praise, advertise, boom; the opposite of knock. Canadians boost their country, their town, and everything they set their hands to, and the newcomer, ultimately falls into the habit.
> Do you know there's lots of people settin' 'round in every town
> Growling like a broody chicken, knocking every good thing down?
> Don't you be that kind of cattle, cause they ain't no use on earth
> You just be a rooster-booster, crow and boost for all you're worth.
> If your town needs boosting, boost 'er; don't hold back and wait and see
> If the other fellow's willin'—sail right in, this country's free.
> Cast your loaves out on the waters: they'll come back's a saying true;
> Maybe, too, they'll come back buttered, when some fellow boosts for you.

Such an optimist is your true Westerner. Unfortunately, an occasional false note sounds in John Sandilands' word-list, as when he includes SHOOT UP THE TOWN, a phrase whose over-ready heroism hardly fits a burg like Winnipeg. But the illustration is good, and shows that the editor is very much *au fait* with contemporary psychological thought:

> When he was a little shaver
> His parents were quite strict—
> He never played with other boys . . .
> Ma feared he would get licked.
> Pa never took him to a show
> He's never seen a park,
> In fact the youngster never knew
> A joyous boyhood lark.
> They told him he'd an angel be,
> And they'd supply the wings,
> But as the pet grew older he
> Cut loose the heavenly strings.
> His early training was a frost,
> He did not win renown,
> He's boarding in Stillwater now,
> For shooting up the town.

More strictly indigenous would be the verse Sandilands uses to show the use of the phrase GETS THERE, meaning 'attains his object':

> The June bug has a gaudy wing
> The lightning bug a flame
> The bed bug has no wings at all
> But he gets there just the same.

Nicely Canadian also—though goodness knows where it comes from—is the verse for BEAT THE BAND:

> Matilda Muggins, pure as any dove
> Awoke one night from sweetest dreams of love
> And saw within the moonlight near her bed
> A spirit writing in a book of red.
> In words of flame it wrote, with mien inspired.
> "What names are these?" the damsel then enquired.
> The spirit, answering, stayed its gleaming pen.
> "The maids whose beauty fires the hearts of men."
> "And am I one?" she queried. "Nay, not so,"
> The spirit said. Matilda spake more low,
> But hopeful still, and begged in accents bland
> "Write me as one that cooks to beat the band."
> The spirit wrote, and vanished. The next night
> It came again with a great scroll of white
> And showed the names whom praise of men had blessed.
> And lo! Matilda's name led all the rest.

As we should expect, the best subject of all is booze. 'TO BOOZE—is to drink continually until drunk, or . . . nearly so. It is to approach the condition of being half-sprung or half-cut.' 'Among the numerous names given to intoxicants,' runs the article under DRINK, 'are appetizer, aqua vitae, blue ruin, bosom friend, ball of fire, belly vengeance, bottled earthquake, breakey-leg, bucket, bumper, bung-juice, cheerer, cinder, digester, dope, drain, eye-opener, facer, fiz, flip, forty-rod lightning, gargle, grapple the rails, hard stuff, heel-tap, heel-broth, invigorator, John Barleycorn, kill-the-beggar, liquid fire, lotion, nightcap, nip, old man's milk, pill, poison, refresher, rot-gut, rouser, settler, snout, slight sensations, smile, something, soother, soul-destroyer, sparkler, stimulant, stingo, strip-me-naked, swig, taste, tanglefoot, tipple, toothful, etcetera.' The words may not be Canadian, but the list most certainly is.

So is the poem Sandilands uses to illustrate that peculiarly Canadian institution, the Cold Snap:

> When the frigid Arctic breezes
> Touch your spine, despite your clothes,
> When old Winter's artists paint you blue
> And leave a crimson nose,
> Why, you should not get excited,
> Though chilblains raise your ire
> But just amble to the basement
> And help nurse the furnace fire.
> There is consolation for you—
> Though the water pipe has burst
> And you've frozen ears and fingers
> And you think this snap's the worst
> Far down in sunny Africa
> Where there's never snow nor sleet,
> A million folks are suffering
> With the itchy, prickly, heat.

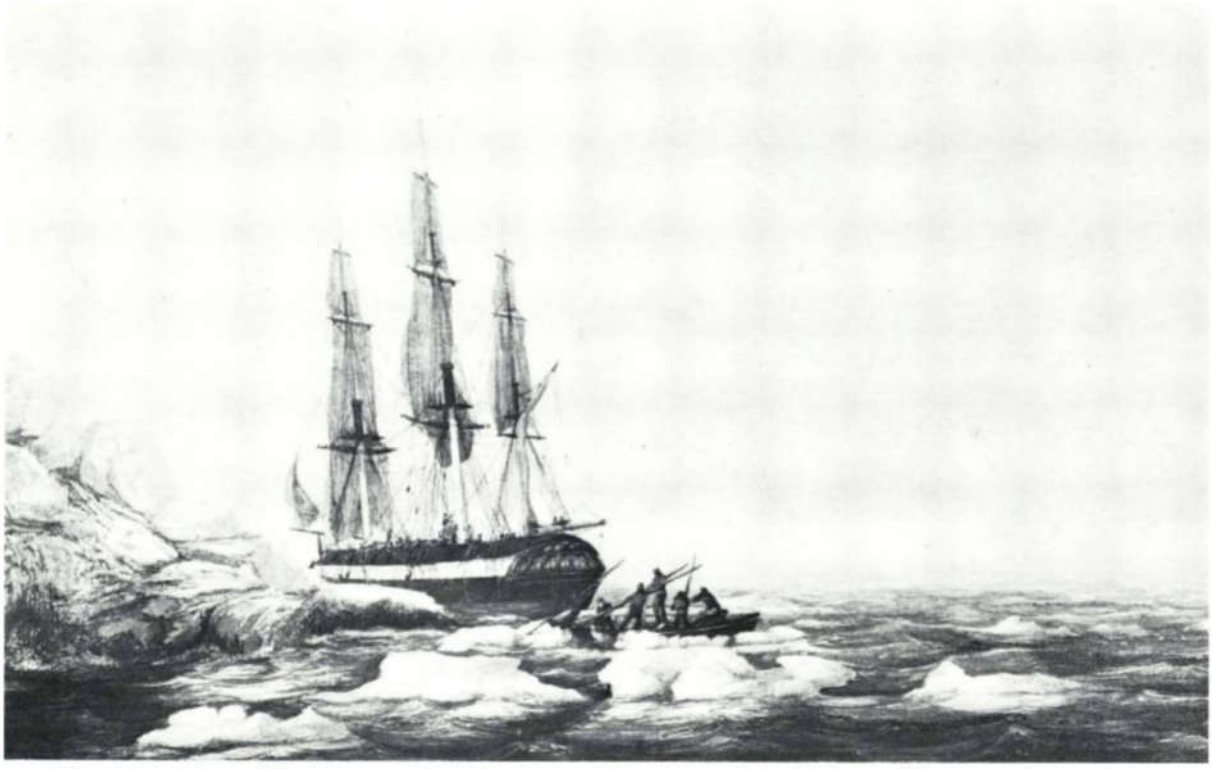
THE SON OF I. GUNN

BY MALVINA BOLUS

IT WAS SUMMER, and once more there was a Company ship in Stromness harbour. It was gay while the *Prince of Wales* was there, but soon it would be the time for farewells as the men recruited by David Geddes, the Company agent, set sail for the new world—that remote and lonely Rupert's Land with its strange Indians and animals and long cold winters. Labourers and boatmen were frequently engaged in Orkney for service in the Bay. The custom was to put a notice on the church door in the various parishes as the surest way to reach the 'lower classes' in the islands for they always attended divine service on Sundays. This kept them informed, among other things, of the opportunity for employment.

Captain Henry Hanwell was carrying the usual group of Orkney 'servants' for the Bay when, supplies of geese, chickens and eggs laid in, water barrels filled, he headed westward on 29 June 1806. To the captain it was an old story for he was making his thirteenth voyage in this ship which he had commanded since she was built for the Hudson's Bay Company. Listed among his passengers on this trip were John Scarth and John Fubbister. Scarth, like many of the others, was from the Parish of Firth; Fubbister alone gave the Parish of St Andrew's, which might have been the parish in Scotland but was more probably the parish of that name not far from Kirkwall. Both were engaged for three-year terms, destined for Albany Factory. Apparently Scarth was an old and experienced hand for his wages of £32 a year were far in advance of the more usual £8 a year for a labourer that Fubbister received; in fact John Scarth's first contract during which he was employed in the Albany River District (he only received £6 a year then) had expired ten years before. He had re-engaged and served a further eight years in the same District as a labourer and steersman, at an increased wage. After returning home in the autumn of 1805, he had once more re-engaged and his fairly high wages would indicate that his work was favourably known to the Company.

The third week in August the *Prince of Wales* dropped anchor at Moose Factory whence John Fubbister and



The ship 'Prince of Wales', in which Fubbister and Scarth travelled, in Hudson Strait on a later voyage.

John Scarth were taken by shallop to Albany, where they arrived on the 27th of August.

The Chief at Albany was John Hodgson, whose jurisdiction extended over the posts up the waterways to far-off Lake Winnipeg and beyond to the Assiniboine and Red Rivers. Little time was lost in putting the recruits to work for early in September a party which included Scarth, Fubbister, and James Brown was despatched up the Albany River to Henley House with provisions and trading goods. Their boat returned before the end of the month, bringing down wood for building boats. Brown and Fubbister must have been well acquainted for Brown received a sum of £1-4-0 from the latter in the same year.

The following May, Scarth, Fubbister, and Brown were part of a bigger brigade of three large boats and three bateaux taking the inland cargo up river. In June the large boat came back from Martin Falls with furs and castoreum. A few days later John Hodgson set off with a barge, three Henley boats (craft built locally for freighting on Albany River), and a bateau carrying the remainder of the inland cargo. John Fubbister was again one of the crew.

Later that year Fubbister went with one of the brigades over the long route by way of Osnaburgh House and Lac Seul to the Winnipeg River and up the Red to the post at Pembina. Hugh Heney (sometimes called Haney) arrived with the two Albany boats on September 12th and resumed charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post. It could not have been a cheerful trip as one of his men, David Spence junior, died on the way. That December came in at Pembina with snow and storms and terrible cold but according to Alexander Henry (the younger) who was looking after the North West Company's interests, the harvesting had been finished nearly two months earlier and there had been plenty of buffalo near at hand, so food was not a problem. Christmas seems to have passed quietly, with no comments, but a few days later there occurred a startling event.

On the morning of 29 December 1807 one of Mr Heney's Orkney recruits who was not well asked to be allowed to remain in Alexander Henry's house for a short time. 'I was surprised at the fellow's demand,' wrote Mr Henry 'however, I told him to sit down and warm himself. I returned to my own room, where I had not been long before he sent one of my people, requesting the favor of speaking with me. Accordingly I stepped down to him, and was much surprised to find him extended on the hearth, uttering dreadful lamentations; he stretched out his hands toward me, and in piteous tones begged to me be kind to a poor, helpless, abandoned wretch, who was not of the sex I had supposed, but an unfortunate Orkney girl, pregnant, and actually in childbirth. In saying this she opened her jacket, and displayed a pair of beautiful, round, white breasts; she further informed me of the circumstances that had brought her into this state. The man who had debauched her in the Orkneys, two years ago, was wintering at Grandes Fourches [an outpost on the Red River]. In about an hour she was safely delivered of a fine boy, and that same day she was conveyed home in my cariole, where she soon recovered.'

Though there is little on record in official journals, the news of this event must have created a sensation. It reached Brandon House in February by John Kipling who had gone from Heney's post to fetch gunpowder and tobacco from John McKay for Pembina. It is reported in the Journal that he told them 'one of Haneys men turned out to be a Woman, and was delivered of a fine boy in Mr Henrys House, the Child was born before they could get her Breeches of'.

How the woman's identity was concealed for so long is a puzzle, but there was evidently no weakness in her work and it is possible that some of the Orkneymen may have been aware of her secret.

In May she had left Pembina, for Peter Fidler on his way out from Swan River and going down the Red River below Pembina heard that Hugh Heney had passed on May 21st and 'the woman Mary Fubbester who was delivered of a Boy 5th Jany. last is also gone out'. In his Journal he added: 'she hired with Mr Geddes in Stromness as a man, in Mens Clothing 1806 remained at Albany one winter & her sex was not known till delivery except to one John Scart her paramour on whose account she came out she worked at any thing & well like the rest of the men . . .'.

Presumably 'Mary Fubbester' was travelling with Heney's party, who reached Martin Falls on the Albany River on June 28th. Here only a brief reference is made by Thomas Vincent, acting chief at Albany, who met them at Martin Falls, that one of Mr Heney's men 'was found to be a woman debauched (so she says) by John Scarth, by whom she has a Child'.

At Albany in 1808 another name appears for in the List of Men's Accounts is Isabel Gun, stationed at Albany Factory, her contract expiring in 1809, and still receiving £8 per annum. In later years, her parish of St Andrew's the only employee from that parish was the clue to her identification with John or Mary Fubbister. The same accounts for 1808-9 show that John Scarth was then stationed at Martin Falls. (He eventually returned home in September 1812.)

A possible clue to connections in the old country may be a payment made from John Fubbister's account in the London ledger in 1807 to one 'Cath. Oman'. The amount was comparatively large, being £6 or the best part of a year's wages. It was quite usual for HBC servants to make over the greater part of their pay to relatives (that being one of their reasons for enlistment) and the name of Oman is one prevalent in Orkney.

Word next comes from the teacher at Albany. For many years there had been attempts to run schools at the Factories in the James Bay area; spelling books were ordered but the teaching left something to be desired for in 1800 there was William Gaudy at Albany 'learning the Boys and assisting the Taylor at times in Sewing, having

Probably Hudson's Bay Company post at Pembina, painted by W. Frank Lynn. H B C COLLN.

only one Leg he is fit for nothing else, . . . ' In 1808 it was decided to send proper schoolmasters to the Bay. Travelling in the *Prince of Wales* which brought back John Hodgson, Chief at Albany, that summer were James Clouston and William Harper, two schoolmasters certified to be 'well qualified'. Harper reached Albany on 16 August 1808 where eleven children were quickly assembled in his school 'for enlightening the minds of the Young' as Hodgson put it.

Soon after his arrival, William Harper wrote (on September 5th) to his patron the Laird of Skaill, William Watt of Breckness, telling of his journey and continuing:

> I have also to inform your Honr. that we have got an Orkney woman here, she came out for the sake of a Sweetheart, but as it happened he had agreed for East Main & she for Albany, she has been Inland 1,500 Miles & has had a Child to one of the men that was in Company with her, & was never known to be a Woman till the very hour she was Delivered, & then she went to a Canadian house that was near by, & asked the Master for a private room, which he granted, & in a few minutes he was alarmed at hearing the cry of a young Child, she is now at the factory & her Child, & her chief employment Is washing for all hands, which indeed she is no Witch at, as I think, as she has been washing for me, the Governor intends to make her a nurse for the Scholars, as she seems not inclined to go home, & I believe he feels more for her misfortune than she is sensible of doing herself.

Schoolmaster Harper varied his duties when on Sunday 16 October, after conducting divine service in the new flanker at Albany, 'he Baptized the Son of Isabel Gunn . . . which performances was afterwards duly registered'.

It seems that Isabel continued to serve the Company for another year, whether as washerwoman or nurse for the scholars or in some other capacity is not known. It was not until 14 September that Isabel Gun was reported in the Albany Fort Journal as '. . . discharged from your Honours Service'. The last that Albany saw of this remarkable woman was on 20 September 1809 when 'Isabella Gun and her Son' embarked on the Company ship *Prince of Wales*. The log does not show the date or place of disembarkation, but Captain Henry Hanwell brought his ship to Stromness harbour on 29 October 1809. And in the London Ledger of Officers' and Servants'

Albany Factory as it was during the time Isabel Gunn was there, sketched by William Richards, one of the boys taught by Gaudy.

H B C COLLN.

Accounts, to 'Jn° Fubbister of St Andrews' was added the notation 'alias Isabella Gun' and 'Home 20 Sep[t]. 1809'.

What Their Honours in London had to say about the whole affair is not known but possibly Isabel Gunn and son were still in mind when the Committee wrote to their agent David Geddes in Stromness in December 1810: '. . . For some time past they have had cause to lament the very inefficient Men who have been sent from the Orknies to the Comp[y]'s Settlements . . . Of late many men have been sent out who, on their arrival were found totally unfit for the Service. The Board will not consider themselves bound by any Agreement, you may make, unless the Men engaged by you are *Stout able & active* . . .' Isabel seems in fact to have been one of the more efficient Servants even if not entirely suitable for the employment anticipated.

The story must have rung around the Bay for many years. Could it be a lingering reference to the tale of the mysterious Isabel that made its way into a skit on the First Franklin Expedition? The satire (discovered by the late Margaret Arnett MacLeod, edited by her and Richard Glover, and published in *The Polar Record* Vol. 15, No. 98, 1971, pp 669-82) is believed to have been written by the fur traders, who were not great admirers of Franklin, in Hudson Bay in 1824-5. One part, written in parody of Franklin's style reads: 'On entering the harbour of the Stone Fort [a mythical post on the Bay] we were greeted by a numerous band of our old friends the Esquimeaux. . . . Our old friend the elegant, insinuating, and inquisitive Dolly Squat asked us many impertinent questions, among others, why we ventured on so long a voyage without bringing our wives with us? We replied: that Oconomy on the score of provisions was the principal cause, but in cases of emergency our Government allowed us to embark a disincumbered Washerwoman.' ◆

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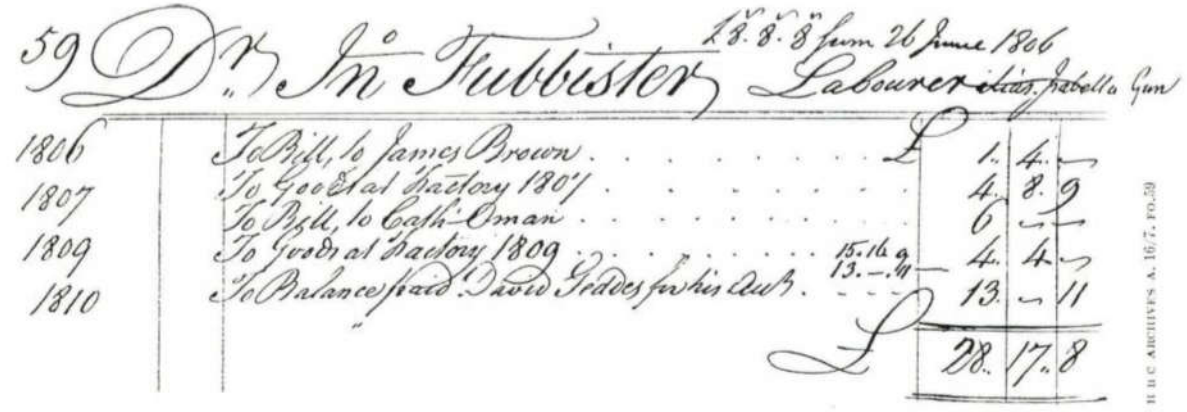
Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Hudson's Bay Company for permission to consult and publish excerpts from these records.



59 Dr. Jn° Fubbister 18. 8. 8 from 26 June 1806 Labourer alias Isabella Gun

1806	To Bill, to James Brown	£	1.	4.
1807	To Goods at Factory 1807		4.	8. 9
1809	To Bill, to Cash Oman		6	
1809	To Goods at Factory 1809	15. 16. 9 / 13. — 4	4.	4
1810	To Balance paid David Geddes for his Acct.		13.	11
		£	28.	17. 8

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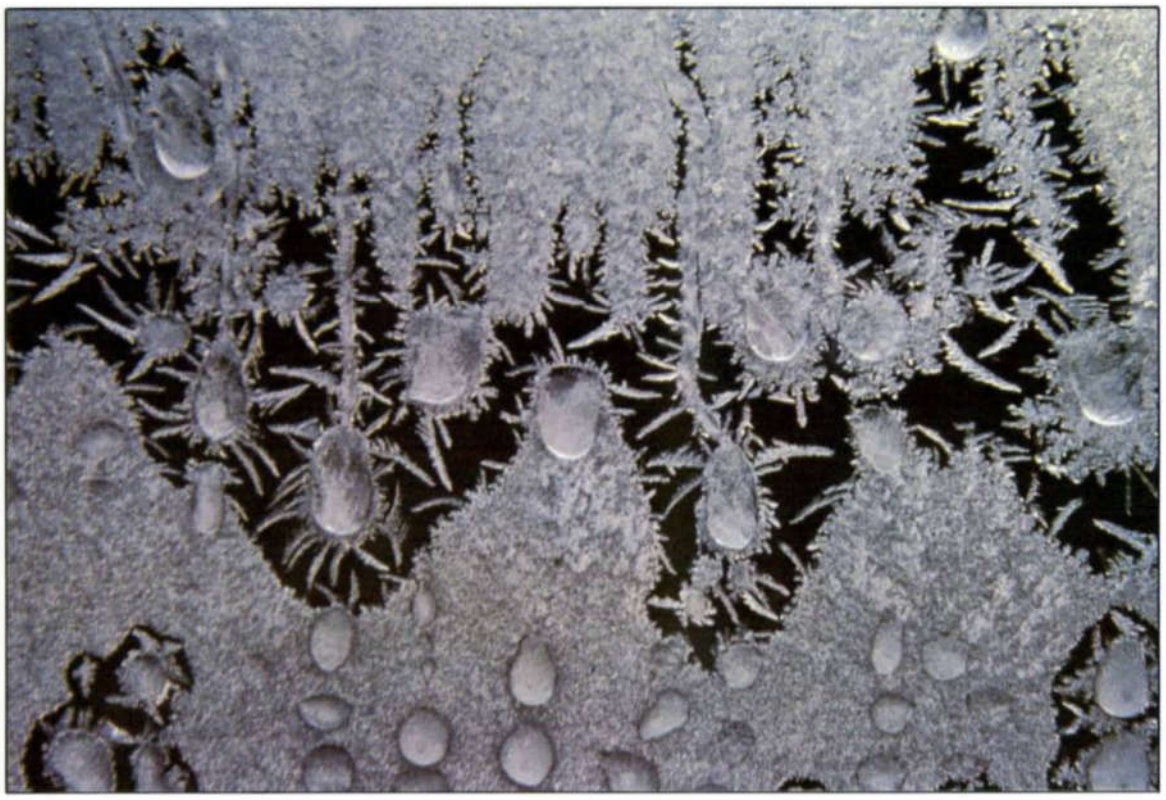
Patterns of the Seasons

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LILLIAN ALLEN



THE ART OF SEEING

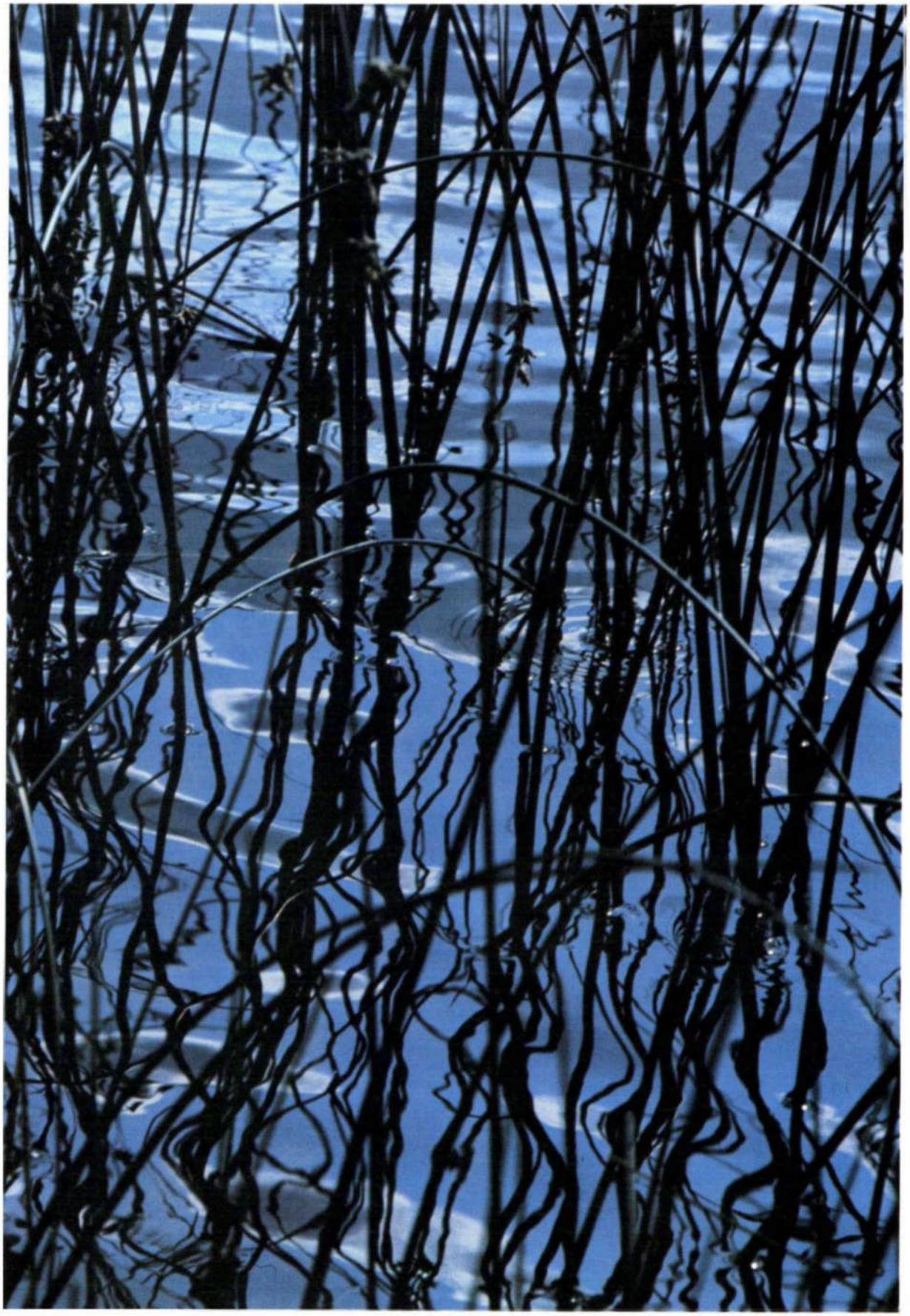
In all nature there is ever changing and ever wonderful design, the patterns created by growing things, by wind and weather—the whorl of a shell, the tracery of a snowflake, the rhythm of a feather, the rippling shadow of reeds in water.

Such creations are there for all to see, but only a few are sufficiently perceptive. One of those few is Lillian Allen, until recently professor of housing and design in the Home Economics faculty at the University of Manitoba. The designs of nature she translates and adapts for the decorative alleviation of man's stark reality, and the beauty she sees she imprints forever on a speck of film in a man-made camera. In this way she brings to others both pleasure and new vision.

Shown here is a sampling of the seasons, a mere taste of the feast stored in Miss Allen's photography.

WINTER

SPRING



AUTUMN

CHRISTMAS AT FORT MACLEOD

December 1876

Dear Old Zell

I daresay you will be surprised to hear again so soon from your "nere do weal" but I must write to wish you all a very merry Christmas & a happy New Year & many of them dear old girl. I hope you will think of me when you drink Absent friends. Of course we are preparing to keep Xmas as best we can, as decorating our rooms with flags, evergreens, appropriate mottoes & last but by no means least our arms & accoutrements, saddlery & all burnished till they flash & sparkle in the bright firelight like the cut glass pendants of a chandeleir, altogether it looks very pretty & reminds one of the Christmas feasts in olden times when the walls were garnished with the arms of the baron & his retainers, with here & there a stag head Stag heads are so plentiful here that no one thinks of sticking one on the wall as a curiousity; Our feast consists of venison, buffalo tongues & beef which our old countrymen say is equal to the "roast beef of old England" so much for a foundation, prairie chicken, mountain grous, jack rabbit & antelope choops as ballast all kinds puddings, pies, tarts, &c almonds, raisons, walnuts, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, all kinds of sweetmeats, of course the largest plum duff ever recorded & would you believe it whiskey ad lib yes such is the degeneracy of the age that we the Mounted temperance association, we who are paid to slay kill & utterly destroy all whiskey traders are all flaming drunk under the Commissioners very nose but he having no nose smells not. Col McLeod has been ordered to Ottawa & we expect that his reign will be a short & a merry one & we are all ready to cry "La roi est mort, vive la roi".

The Winter so far has been milder than any I remember in Canada with scarcely any snow. first we have a little snow, then a little frost & then a Chinook wind which you must feel to understand for instance two of us were doing sentry looking out for whiskey traders on top of a high bare hill one very cold day, we took it in turns to go down for a warm every hour well I was down in the hollow running quarter heats against time when I lifted up mine eyes & lo my chum was lying comfortably in the snow taking a smoke, of course I went up to enquire whence this thusness & discovered that a wind as warm as we get in July was blowing right through the Coutanie pass, on a cold day you feel a puff of hot air all of a sudden & the snow if there is any disapears at the rate of an inch an hour till eather snow or wind call time. whence it comes or wither it goes we know not but we accept it as it is & are thankful. Our horses are herded on the open prairie & are doing well they are to be kept out all winter

Good bye dear old girl
Believe me ever
Your loving brother
F C with fond love to
you T C & the Atoms

The writer of this letter, which is now in the Manitoba Provincial Archives, was twenty-three-year-old Frances Fraser Galt 'Frank' Carruthers from Toronto. He had enlisted in the North West Mounted Police the previous year and was stationed at Fort Macleod (in present Alberta) when he wrote to his older sister Georgiana, affectionately known as Zell. The T C mentioned at the end was Thomas Clarkson, his brother-in-law.

PAINTED NAMES

By William Barr and Ralph Smith

For the past two summers Mr Smith has led scuba diving expeditions to Marble Island; William Barr is editor of 'the musk-ox', a publication of the University of Saskatchewan where he is assistant professor of geography.

IN JANUARY 1879, Colonel William Gilder, correspondent for the *New York Herald*, and second-in-command of Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka's expedition, reached Marble Island, off Rankin Inlet on the west shore of Hudson Bay, after a very arduous and dangerous dog-sled trip from Schwatka's camp at Daly Bay. The main object of Schwatka's expedition was to search for records or relics of Franklin's last expedition, and the purpose of Gilder's journey to Marble Island was to interview Captain Potter of the New Bedford whaler *Abbie Bradford*, wintering in Knight Harbour at the west end of Marble Island. It was rumoured that Captain Potter had been given a silver spoon engraved with the word 'Franklin' by an Aivilik Eskimo woman; the spoon had supposedly been found on King William Island or Adelaide Peninsula.

In this respect, Gilder's trip was fruitless. While Captain Potter had been given three spoons on that occasion, the one matching the description had mysteriously disappeared shortly afterwards.

However, Gilder's visit to Marble Island was not entirely wasted. As a result of it, we have an interesting description of the New Bedford whalers wintering in Knight Harbour. Also Gilder left a record of a list of names he spotted, written in red paint on the creamy-white quartzite of Marble Island:

> Upon the bald face of a rock near the outside harbour is a list of names written in red paint nearly a century ago; but whether a visitor's list or a gigantic tombstone to record those who perished here long ago by shipwreck is unknown.

The list of names was not seen again, or at least not reported, until 10 August 1970, when this photograph was taken by Ralph Smith, leader of an expedition which is attempting to unravel the mystery of the disappearance of the James Knight expedition on Marble Island in 1719. Mr Smith and his Toronto companions, all keen amateur scuba-divers, have met with considerable success. In two seasons, they have located a house which is almost certainly that built by Knight and his men, and a sunken hulk which is almost certainly one of Knight's ships.

It was conjectured that the list of names might be those of the crew of the Hudson's Bay Company ships *Seahorse III* or *Beaver*. However a chance discovery of a reference to the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company sloop *Churchill*, under the command of Thomas Prince, was definitely at Marble Island in the fall of 1786 provided a lead as to the true origin of the list of names. If Prince were at Marble Island in 1786, it seemed reasonable that he might have been back the following year.

An enquiry to the Hudson's Bay Company archives in London produced the following information:

> Prince's log shows that the sloop *Churchill* sailed from Churchill Fort on 21 July, 1787, and traded with the Eskimos in "Knaps Bay" (just north of Eskimo Point), "Navels Bay" (Dawson Inlet), "Whale Cove" and Marble Harbour. From Marble Island she sailed for Churchill arriving there on 17 August.

Even more exciting is the accompanying extract from the log of the *Churchill* by Thomas Prince and published here by permission of the Hudson's Bay Company.

A Journal of our Voyage to the Northward. 1787.

A List of our People to the Northward

Thomas Prince	Master
Robt. Garroch	Mate
James Dunning	Seaman
George Williamson	"
Alexander Hunter	"
John Inkester	"
James Irvine	"
John McKimie	Servant'

Remarks in Marble Hill Harbour 1787

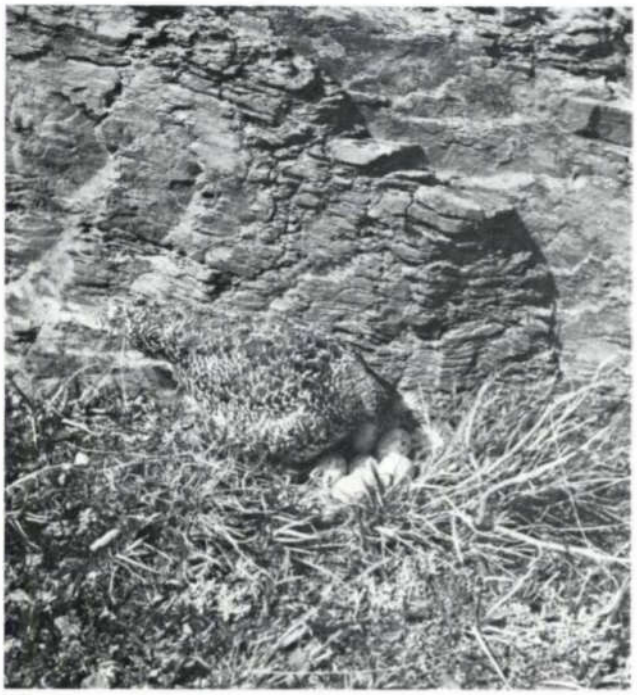
4 August '. . . at 4 came to anchor in 8fm. in Marble Harbour firing Guns to alarme the Natives no Esquemays upon the Island Sent our Esquemay Passenger to acquaint the others. the latter part the wind Variable all round the compass and fine weather. Employ'd Drying and Packing our Deer Skins'

5 August 'the first part the wind variable got all our Skins upon Deck and Shifted our oil Casks to get fresh Water to hand. Stowed them away again. At 3 P.M. nine Canoes came a long Side Traded with them 20 Wolves and 18 Deer Skins they cannot give any account of any more natives that will be here this Season. they have not kill'd one Whale this Year the Latter part a Small Breeze at NE. and dark weather at 9 A.M. sent two men a hunting.'

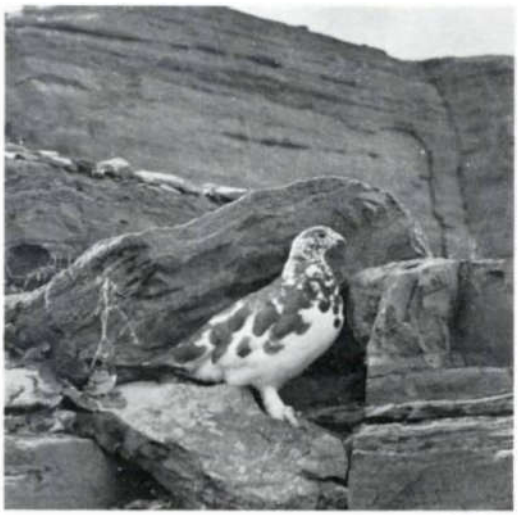
6 August 'the first of these 24 hours a fresh Breeze at NE. at 3 P.M. the Hunters returned with three Swans. the middle part foggy at 3 A.M. Scraping the Sloop Sides. At 9 a fresh Breeze and clear got under way and run out at ¼ past 9 clear of the Harbour mouth at 10 Marble Harbour N B E¼E Distance 3 miles got our boat in and made sail . . .'

While one might have wished that some reference had been made in the log to a member of the crew writing the names of the officers and crew on the rock (all the names were clearly painted by one person), it is fascinating to see how closely the list matches that recorded in the log. Together they provide an insight into an interesting period in the Company's exploration and trading activities in the Bay and its association with this little island. If nothing else, this list of names is a high recommendation for the durability of the paint used! ◆

RALPH SMITH



T. CHOATE



T. CHOATE

A white-tailed ptarmigan at the nest and below, two or three day old chicks. The ptarmigan above is changing from fall to winter plumage.

CLAIT BROWN

The male (left) and female white-tailed ptarmigan in breeding plumage. CLAIT BROWN

THE PTARMIGANS

BY E. O. HÖHN

Dr Höhn is associate professor of physiology, University of Alberta.

VERY FEW SPECIES OF BIRDS are hardy enough to winter in the Arctic; prominent in this select group are the Willow and Rock Ptarmigan. Both belong to the grouse family, in fact the British call the willow ptarmigan, willow grouse, restricting the word ptarmigan for the bird we call the rock ptarmigan. Willow ptarmigan are about fifteen inches long, rock ptarmigan only about thirteen inches. In winter both have their feet and toes densely covered with small feathers. This feathering not only protects their feet from the cold but also increases the weight-bearing area and like a snowshoe, prevents sinking in soft snow. In winter ptarmigan are white all over except for a black mark extending from the beak to the eye and a little beyond, which is found in male rock ptarmigan and a small proportion of their hens, and in both species the tail feathers are black with white tips. When the birds are on the ground the black tail feathers are hidden by the long upper tail coverts and the birds blend completely into their background of snow when, aware of danger, they crouch immobile, particularly on overcast days when there are no shadows to give them away. Both kinds of ptarmigan have a summer and fall plumage: this is reddish brown with fine blackish markings in the willow ptarmigan, and greyish brown with yellowish spots as well as black markings in the rock ptarmigan; in both of these plumages the bird is pigmented all over except for the flight feathers, the abdomen, and the lower tail coverts which remain white. They blend extremely well into their background of lichen-covered rocks and scanty, largely brownish vegetation.

Only the fact that snowfall in the Arctic, though it stays on the ground for a long time, is light in quantity—so scanty in fact that in other latitudes so low a precipitation is associated with desert conditions—makes it possible for ptarmigan to get at their food plants under the snow. These are mainly willow buds and small twigs in the case of willow ptarmigan, and for the rock ptarmigan principally buds and small shoots of dwarf birch, bilberry, and mountain cranberry. They particularly seek out hillsides where much of the snow has been swept away by wind action and they have often been seen feeding in the snow craters which caribou and reindeer

A white-tailed ptarmigan in winter plumage and below its tracks and the foot and wing prints made as it takes flight, Jasper National Park.

create by pawing the snow aside with their hooves. Ptarmigan may thus be seen boldly picking up berries from under the very noses of grazing deer.

The ability of ptarmigan to withstand cold is apprently entirely due to the excellent insulation provided by their thick plumage. Their body temperature and their metabolic rate, or rate of heat production, is no different from that of other birds. When one studies the heat production of ptarmigan at different environmental temperatures, the temperature at which they are forced, in order to balance heat-loss, to increase their heat production, the so-called critical temperature, is found to be much lower than that of birds of the temperate zone e.g. the critical temperature of the English sparrow is 68°F; that of the willow ptarmigan was not reached by temperatures as low as 17°F below zero.

Cold can kill ptarmigan only if they cannot feed. This will happen if a frost follows a thaw so that the ptarmigan's food plants are covered by ice. Following such conditions many starved ptarmigan have at times been found in Spitsbergen and in Siberia.

Ptarmigan regularly burrow into soft snow to sleep, when the snow, of course, provides them with additional insulation from the cold. In connection with their sleeping in the snow, they have developed an interesting and evidently beneficial habit. Instead of walking to the selected sleeping spot they plunge into the snow flying and, on leaving their burrows in the morning, fly up instead of walking away. The important result is that no tracks leading to the sleeping spot are left to guide foxes or other predators. The habit of entering and leaving sleeping burrows on the wing has been observed in willow ptarmigan in Alaska and quite independently in rock ptarmigan in Siberia. As these birds are generally very reluctant to fly except during courtship or when in migration, the flights to and from the sleeping burrows are all the more remarkable.

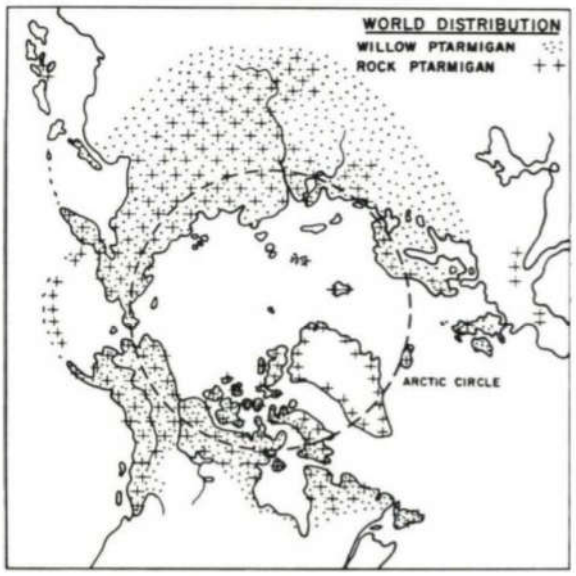
Though many ptarmigan stay through the winter in the far north many willow ptarmigan move from the tundra into the northern coniferous forest zone extending the winter range of the species by five hundred miles or so to the south. Storms overtaking migrating ptarmigan may occasionally cause many deaths. It is recorded that in the winter of 1918 the bodies of willow ptarmigan which had migrated from the north Russian Island of Kolguev to the mainland, were found in regular windrows along the shore. Ptarmigan of this species also migrate from the New Siberian Islands to winter on the mainland. They generally congregate on the most southern of these islands between October to December and only venture on the ninety-mile crossing to the mainland when the intervening sea is frozen. They can then come down on the sea ice to rest *en route* and flocks of ptarmigan doing just that have been encountered by several Russian expeditions.

The use of sea ice for resting on long crossings from one land mass to another probably explains much of the

Distribution of the white-tailed ptarmigan.

world distribution of ptarmigan. There are no ptarmigan on the Shetlands, Faroe Islands, or on St Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea. All these are islands within the general range of ptarmigan distribution but they are set in seas which do not freeze. On the other hand there are rock ptarmigan in Greenland (which was undoubtedly colonized from the Canadian Arctic islands) as well as on Spitsbergen, Franz Josef Land and Iceland. The details of the plumages of the rock ptarmigan of these islands indicate that they are most closely related to those of Greenland and indeed Greenland is connected to the first two of these island archipelagos by pack ice at certain seasons, while the gap between Greenland and Iceland is at any rate much reduced by pack ice.

Both willow and rock ptarmigan have a very wide distribution which embraces vast areas of the northern parts of the old and new worlds. The Red Grouse of the British Isles is merely a specialized race of the willow ptarmigan which, in adaptation to the mild oceanic climate of its home, has lost the white flight feathers—they are almost black in the red grouse and, instead of the white winter plumage of its relatives, it retains a reddish brown plumage all the year round. Having lived for years in a small English town surrounded by grouse moors I got to know the red grouse well and when later I flushed my first willow ptarmigan in the Mackenzie Delta, I was struck by the absolute identity of its



E. O. HOHN

Hen rock ptarmigan on the nest and, below, the male in distraction display, Chesterfield Inlet, N.W.T.

E. O. HOHN

cackling alarm call with the well remembered call of its British representative.

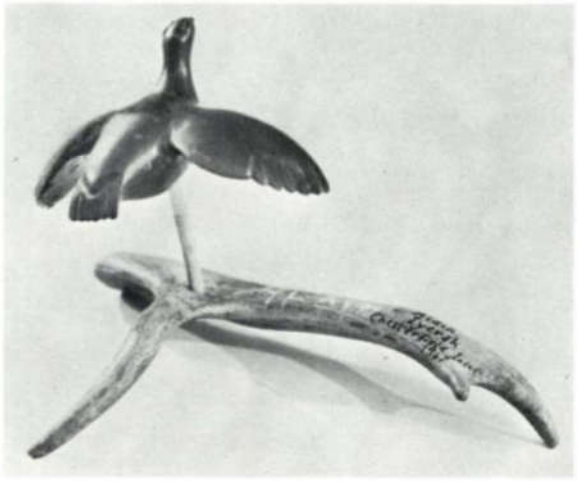
A large west Siberian race of the willow ptarmigan is noteworthy for its range which includes much country nowadays devoted to the growing of cereals, and its nests have sometimes been found on grain fields. This bird has taken to grain feeding to a considerable extent, and is considered to be the best of the ptarmigan for the table.

The existence of relatively southern isolated populations of rock ptarmigan as in the Pyrenees, the Alps, and Japan is explained in relation to the ice age. During this period the tundra extended in Western Europe to the foot of the Alps and Pyrenees. As the ice cap later receded, willow ptarmigan, a bird of the low country, followed its retreat to the northeast, so did most of the rock ptarmigan but some followed the glaciers which retreated up the valleys of these mountains and colonized the alpine zone above the timber line.

So far two species of ptarmigan have been mentioned but there is a third species restricted to North America, the White-Tailed Ptarmigan, which inhabits high country from central Alaska southwards in the Rocky Mountain system as far as northernmost New Mexico. It is the smallest of the ptarmigan, reaching a length of thirteen and a half inches at the outside, and is easily distinguished from the others by the fact that its tail is all white at all seasons. Whereas in parts of Alaska and the Yukon all three species occur, this ptarmigan occupies the highest levels on the mountains while the willow ptarmigan takes up the lowest levels.

All ptarmigan are excellent eating and are shot and snared wherever they occur except in Japan where the small ptarmigan population is protected all the year round as a 'National Monument'. In the breeding season

Eskimo soapstone carving, Chesterfield Inlet.



E. O. HOHN

J. BEATTIE

Willow ptarmigan in winter plumage, Lake Athabasca.

these birds are so tame that Eskimo children succeed in killing a certain number by throwing sticks or stones at them. In the aggregate ptarmigans contribute significantly to human food consumption. Known as 'partridges', they were a very important source of food to the early fur traders in the north.

The annual kill of the red grouse in Scotland alone has been estimated at 1½ million birds; if one considers the vast areas in Eurasia and North America inhabited by these birds, the annual world harvest is likely to be of the order of 50 million. In Britain red grouse are hunted by being driven by teams of beaters over 'butts' in which the hunters are concealed. The birds fly over in packs at a speed of something like forty miles an hour. The hunter can get several shots into one pack, for he generally uses two guns, a loader at his side loading one gun while the sportsman uses another. By this system something like 350 grouse have on occasion been shot in a single day by one 'gun'. In Scotland red grouse are of considerable importance to highland land owners; as an example of this I would cite from an article by Jenkins and Watson, two British naturalists, an estate of 100,000 acres which derived £14,000 a year from the lease of the hunting rights of its grouse moors but only £6,700 in rents for farmland.

All three ptarmigans are territorial, the males in spring claim a parcel of ground by strutting about and delivering their calls. Rock and willow ptarmigan moreover show short song flights in which they fly up steeply to a height of ten yards or so and then glide down calling vigorously. The call of willow ptarmigan is a cackling 'grrr guack guack guack, go back, go back' that of the rock ptarmigan a reeling 'rrrp' reminiscent of the noise of the spinning reel of a fishing rod, which is built up in the cock's 'song' to something like 'rroopoor Brr rrr roo roo'. The cock white-tailed ptarmigan calls from the ground, its call is shriek which can be represented by the letters 'karra kee, kee, tack tack tack'. If a male bird invades the territory claimed by another, it is threatened and, if it does not retire, attacked. Serious fights however are rare, the intruding bird when on another's ground acts as if it were aware it had no right to be there and readily gives way. When a hen enters a cock's territory the latter struts around her with dropped half open wings, its tail cocked up and spread out like a fan. During this time the comb of bright red naked skin above the eye of the cock swells up, apparently it gets engorged with blood, further adding to his striking appearance. The hen when sufficiently impressed will crouch down, when mating follows. All ptarmigan lay fairly large sets of eggs, six to ten in number, only the hens incubate, but the males stay close by and draw off would be predators by distraction displays in which they run about with dragging wings.

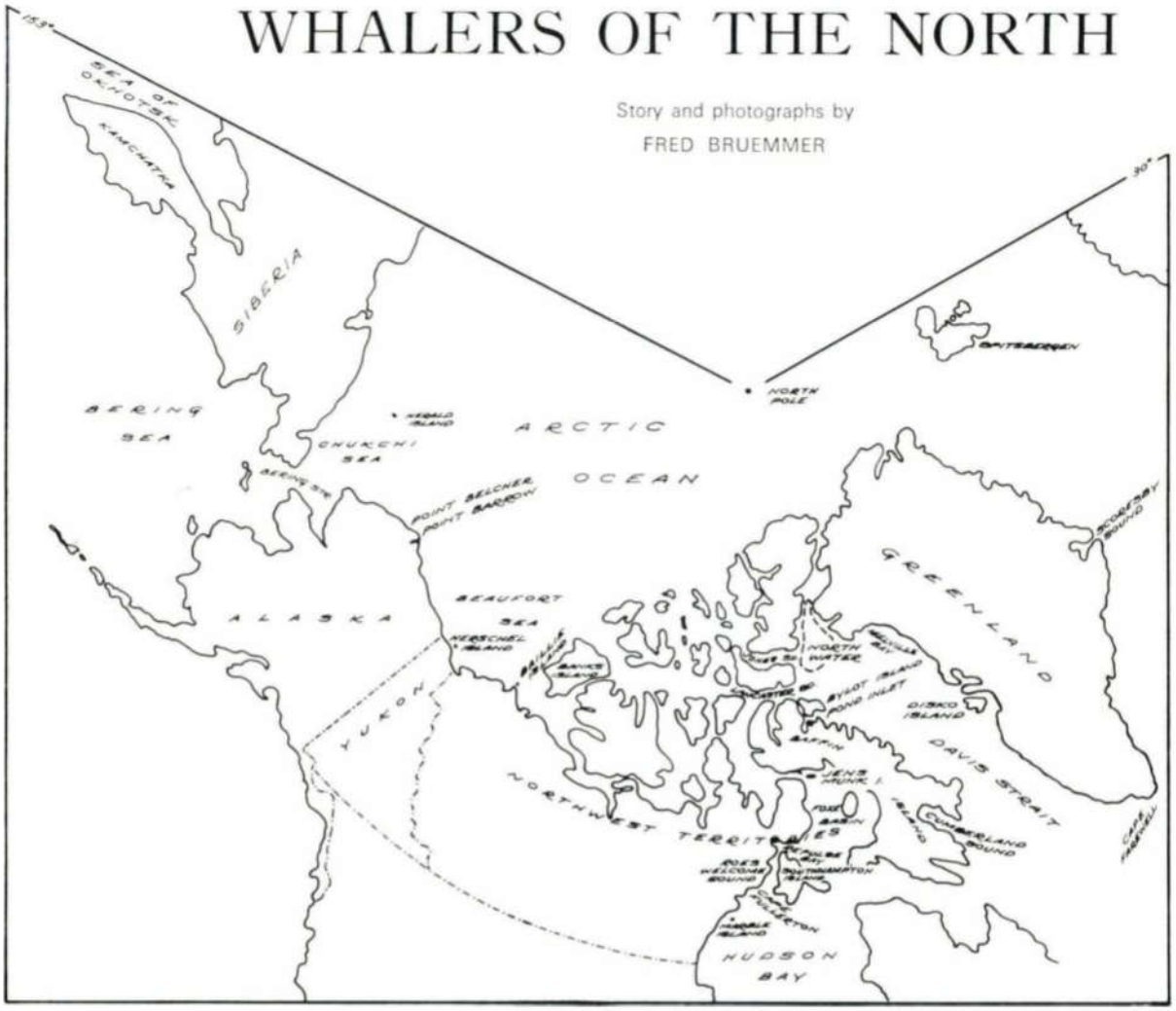
Though white-tailed ptarmigan populations seem to be fairly stable, those of willow and rock ptarmigan fluctuate widely, the birds becoming locally abundant for a year or two then showing a sudden decline followed by a gradual build up to peak numbers. There is some evidence that the pattern is cyclic with population peaks being reached at approximately ten year intervals. This is certainly the case in Iceland where the number of birds exported annually from the early 1860s is on record. The figures have been graphed by Dr Gundmundsson of the University of Reikjavik, and show a striking pattern of peaks at ten year intervals.

We do not yet know what causes this cycle. Possibly it is a reaction to overabundance, the birds when in dense population responding to this by decreased secretion of the hormones of the pituitary which normally activate the sex glands in spring so that fewer eggs are laid and the fertility of the males is also decreased.

The word ptarmigan is one of the very few English words of Gaelic origin. It stems from *tarmachan*, a word which itself is of uncertain meaning and which in English acquired the unsounded initial *p* as a copyist's error for it was originally spelt, for example by James I in 1617, as 'termigant'. The Eskimos call ptarmigan *achigik* (or an evidently related word, for there are many local variants), applying this name to whichever of the two species is the more common in their area and adding some suffix to distinguish the less frequently seen one. For example, about Chesterfield Inlet, *achigik* designates the locally common rock ptarmigan, and *achigivik* the 'real ptarmigan', the willow ptarmigan. In the Mackenzie Delta where the willow ptarmigan predominates, that is called *achigik* and the more local rock ptarmigan is called *achigik niksatuoluk*, the belching (from its call) *achigik*. The northern Indians are most familiar with the willow ptarmigan and their names for it, *daka* in Loucheux, *kappa* in Hare and Slavey, and *gaspa* in Chipewyan, seem to have been suggested by this bird's 'go back' call. ◆

WHALERS OF THE NORTH

Story and photographs by
FRED BRUEMMER



The Basques were the master whalers of mediaeval Europe. At first they operated from shore stations in the Bay of Biscay, but after François Sopite of St Jean de Luz invented the ship-borne tryworks to render blubber into train oil, they roamed far afield in search of their gigantic prey. They may have reached the New World before Columbus and Cabot. They were well established in the Gulf of St Lawrence, along the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts early in the 16th century. Tadoussac, on the St Lawrence north shore was their headquarters and when Champlain arrived they treated him rudely as an unwelcome interloper. Remnants of their tryworks can still be seen on Ile-aux-Basques in the St Lawrence.

Envious of the Basques' success, the merchants of Bristol in 1594 equipped the thirty-five ton *Grace* to go whaling in the New World. The trip was no success. A few walrus were taken and some baleen from two wrecked Basque ships.

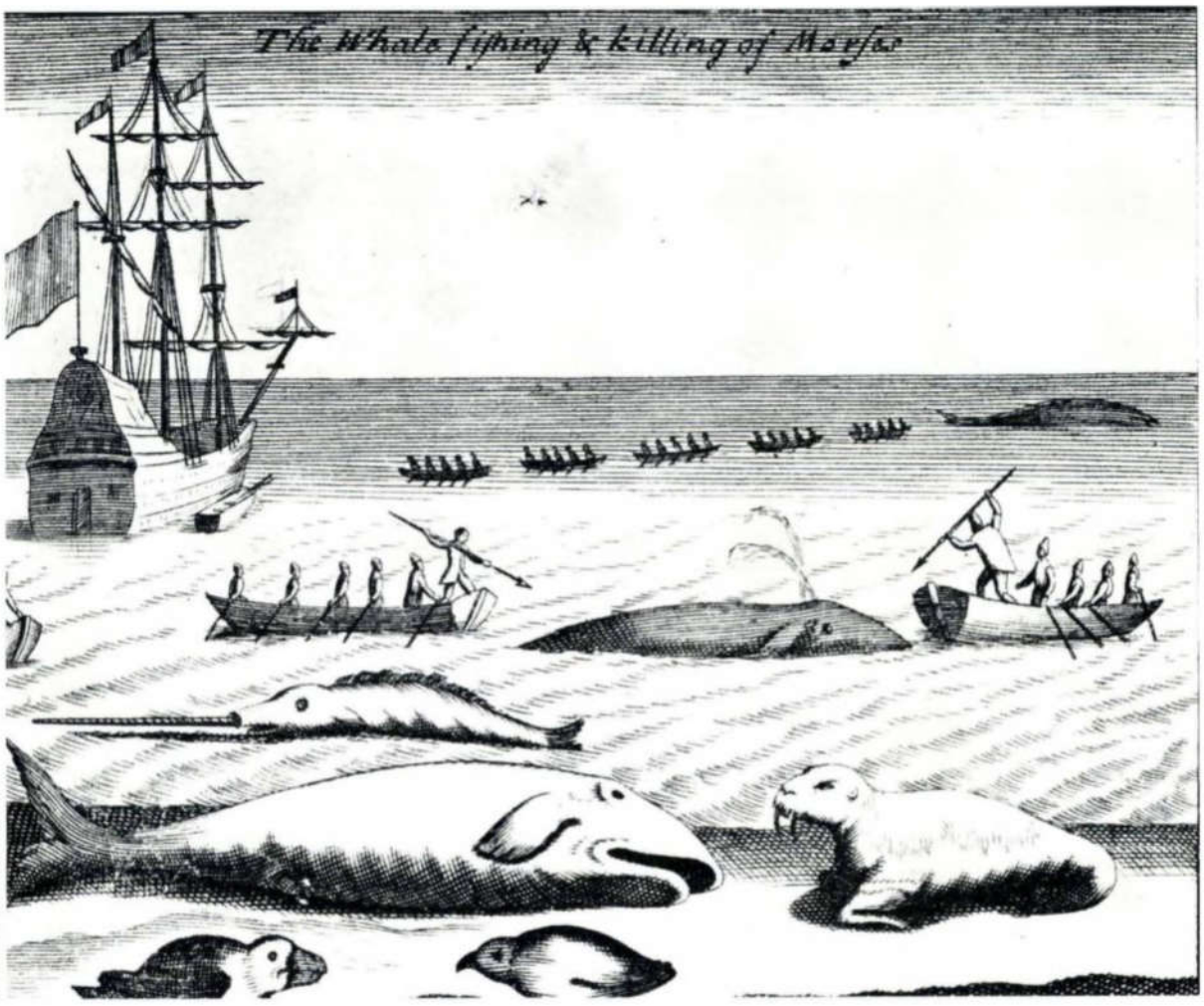
In 1607, England's Muscovy Company asked Henry Hudson to sail to Cathay via the North Pole. Ice stopped him at 81° N near Spitsbergen (discovered already by Barents in 1596), but he did find an abundance of whales in the area. They were Greenland right whales (*Balaena mysticetus*), the bowhead of the whalers, 'which whale is the best of all sorts', according to the Muscovy Company. They were called 'right whales' because they were the right ones to hunt. They were slow swimmers and, when killed, did not sink.

These were the whales of the ice. They were huge (forty to sixty feet) lumbering animals, with a gigantic bulbous head, a mouth the size of a large living room, and flukes twenty-four feet wide. They were wrapped in a blanket of blubber nearly two feet thick. There were thirty tons of blubber on a large bowhead, and four tons of it rendered into three tons of valuable oil. From the roof of its cavernous mouth hung six hundred to eight

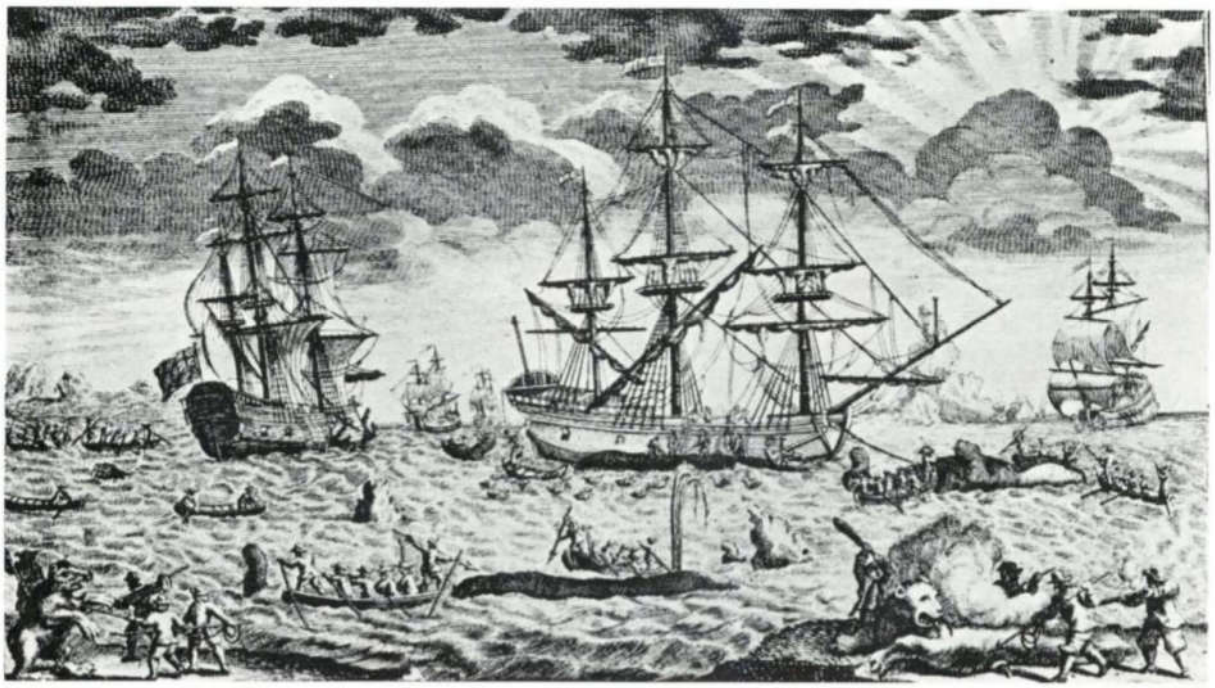
hundred triangular baleen plates, ten to thirteen feet long and spaced at quarter-inch intervals. The whales swam slowly along the ice front, scooping up 'brit', as the whalers called the myriad tiny pteropods and crustaceans that form their food. When they had a mouthful, the one-ton tongue moved up, the water gushed out through the lattice-work of baleen, and the retained animals were pressed back and swallowed.

In the days before plastics, baleen—a tough, resilient, keratinous substance—had many uses. Shredded and coloured, it was made into the panache on knights' helmets, or used to stuff chairs and bolsters. Ramrods were made of it, and fishing rods, umbrella ribs and the springs of the first typewriters. Most important, 'whalebone' was needed for women's stays and corsets, and the hoops of their voluminous skirts. The poet Pope said of the ladies of his day, they were 'stiff with hoops, and arm'd with ribs of whale'. So valuable was baleen, that at one time a single bowhead whale could pay for a two-year whaling voyage. The bowhead was thus the ideal whale: very slow, very timid, very fat, and with a ton or more of baleen in its mouth, worth at one time $6 a pound.

Remnants of a 16th century Basque tryworks on Ile-aux-Basques in the St Lawrence River and below, a whaling scene published in London, 1705.



PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA



The Greenland Whalers, an 18th century line engraving by R. Sheppard.

No wonder the English reacted immediately to Hudson's report on the immense number of whales in the Spitsbergen area. They sent their first ships north in 1610 and 1611, but in 1612 the Dutch followed, and then the Germans and French, all at first with Basque harpooners. Soon five hundred to six hundred ships sailed north each year, with 20,000 men or more, warships accompanying the fleets of each nation. The Dutch built a town, Smeerenberg (Blubbertown), at the northwest tip of Spitsbergen, in 1622. There, at nearly 80° north, they had taverns and a church, bakeries (the baker blew a bugle when the buns were ready) and a bordello.

The profits were, for that age, astronomical. Between 1675 and 1721, the Dutch alone employed 5,886 ships in the 'Greenland Fishery' (Spitsbergen was thought to be part of Greenland and whales were commonly referred to as fish). They took 32,907 whales, with a gross value of $82,267,000. The whales were, of course, quickly decimated. By about 1630 the 'Bay Fishery' in the fiords and inlets of Spitsbergen was nearly finished. The fleet then moved to the 'West Ice', the enormous crescent of pack ice between Greenland and Spitsbergen. It was not unusual to see a hundred whaling ships moored to the edge of the pack, close together, while their boats roamed among the floes, trying to 'fasten' to the whales which each year became scarcer and more elusive. With fortunes invested in ships and material, it was time to look for new whaling grounds.

In 1719 two adventurous Dutchmen eased their tubby, blunt-bowed, high-pooped, whaling vessels round Greenland's Cape Farewell and sailed up its west coast into Davis Strait, discovered by John Davis in 1586 in those ships with the lovely names, the *Sunshine* and the *Moonshine*. The Dutch were delighted with Davis Strait. All along the edge of the shifting pack, whales lolled in the water, their twin fountains of exhaled breath hanging like plumes in the frosty air—a promise of wealth. Four years later, three hundred and fifty ships, mainly Dutch, German and Basque were hunting whales in Davis Strait.

The English, who had discovered the Greenland Fishery and Davis Strait, did poorly in either place. While the Dutch made fortunes, the English were lucky if they broke even. In 1725 they sent twelve ships to Davis Strait. They took twenty-five whales (the same year the Dutch took about 1,000), hardly sufficient 'to pay for the expense incurred by the fitments and the hire of foreign harpooners'. But slowly, tenaciously, they learnt the art of arctic whaling. By 1752 there were forty British ships in Davis Strait and four years later eighty-three. Increasingly, too, the Scots became interested in whaling and soon the tradition developed for both English and Scottish ships to recruit a good portion of their crew in the Shetland and Orkney Islands.

The New Englanders also began to look covetously at the wealth to be won from arctic whaling. The *Mayflower* pilgrims had nearly settled at Cape Cod in 1620 because it seemed 'a profitable place for fishing, for the largest whales of the best kind', and all through the 17th century New Englanders were busily engaged in coastal whaling, employing mainly Indians as crewmen. One New England ship went to Davis Strait in 1732. It

brought back one dead whale and one live polar bear. Five years later, Provincetown sent a dozen hundred-ton ships north, crowded with so many whaler-sailors that only fourteen men were left in town.

The ships from all nations (Danish, Dutch, German, British, French and New England) headed for Greenland's west coast, patrolled the pack, and poked into bays and fiords until north of Disko Island they were stopped by the 'Middle Pack', a vast barrier of ice.

The whalers were ship-based and sea-oriented. Ships of the fleets stayed fairly close together. If one or more were crushed by ice (a regular occurrence), survivors fled to other ships. Contact with natives seems to have been minimal, probably just as well, since the whalers were a rough lot. How rough can be gathered from an act passed by the Dutch States General in 1727 forbidding the 'robbery and murder of the native populations'.

Indirectly, though, whaling may have profoundly affected the Eskimos. The ascendancy of Thule culture Eskimos seems to have been based, in part, on their ability to hunt Greenland whales successfully. This permitted the establishment of larger settlements (with houses built partly of whale bones), since even one whale represented an enormous amount of food, equal to about fifty walrus, or more than 1,000 seals. When whales became scarce, communities were forced to scatter into smaller bands in order to subsist on seal, caribou and muskox. The umiak, once primarily a whaling boat (it still is used for this purpose in Alaska), became a mere travelling boat, the 'women's boat'.

Just how much one solitary whale (and before the white whalers came there were tens of thousands of whales in the Arctic) must have meant to an Eskimo community, became clear to me when I stayed with Pewatook, an Eskimo on Jens Munk Island in northern Foxe Basin. He is the only eastern Eskimo to have killed a bowhead whale in recent years (in 1965). His family, three other Eskimo families, and all their dogs (about thirty-five) lived on that whale for more than a year. Being sea-oriented, the Thule Eskimos of old would not have had nearly as many dogs, so that one or more whales could have supplied bulk food for quite a good-sized community for a long time.

The American Revolution ruined the New England whaling fleet. Nantucket, almost entirely dependent on whaling by then, tried desperately to stay neutral. Despite this, one hundred and thirty-four of the island's one hundred and fifty whaling ships were captured or

Lichen encrusted whale bones at a Thule culture site, Ellesmere Island. Pewatook of Jens Munk Island, below, with jawbone of the bowhead whale he killed in 1965.

destroyed, a loss of over $1,000,000, and that in the days when a man's daily wage was about sixty cents. Hardly had the whaling fleets begun to recover from that shock, when the Napoleonic wars brought new disasters. Privateers prowled the seas, and letters of marque were issued by all involved governments with deadly liberality. Even whaling ships carried them.

While some whalers profited from privateering, the industry as a whole suffered a near eclipse. The French, who had just hired Nantucket experts to set them up in the whaling business and sent forty ships from Dunkirk to Davis Strait in 1793 gave up first. The British got even with the Dutch, their chief whaling competitors for nearly two centuries, and wiped out the remnants of the Dutch whaling fleet in 1798. Finally, with the end of the War of 1812, arctic whaling was resumed with new vigour, almost exclusively by British and American ships.

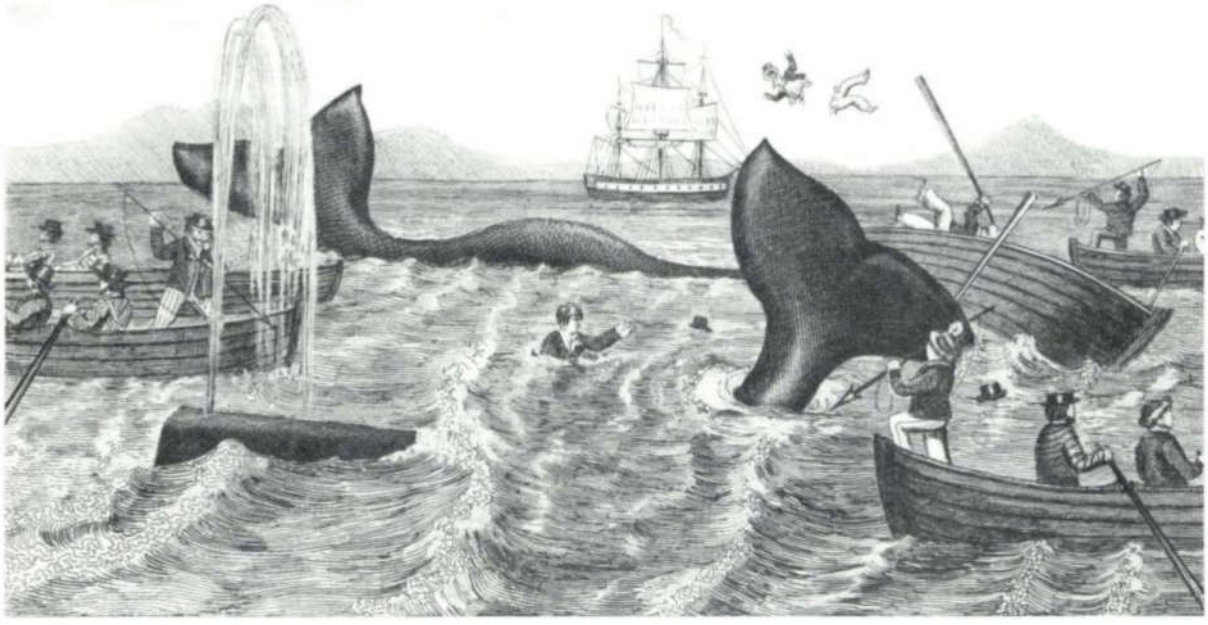
The most famous whalers of this period were William Scoresby senior and junior of Whitby, England. Both were extremely successful whaling captains, but they were also inventors, explorers and scientists. Captain Scoresby Sr invented the crow's-nest, an enclosed platform high on the mast for the lookout. Until then 'standing mast-heads' in the icy arctic winds was justly feared by whalemen, even when swathed in woollens 'like a mummy in sere-cloth'. Together, father and son explored the northeast coast of Greenland (Scoresby Sound is named after them). Most important, Captain Scoresby Jr, a respected scientist, was aware that beyond the Middle Pack, that mass of ice north of Disko, lay the 'North Water', an extensive area of open water in northern Baffin Bay, normally ice-free in May.

He wrote about it in 1817 to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society. The 'North Water', he suggested, might extend far enough to permit discovery of the long-sought-for Northwest Passage. Evidently he expected, or at least hoped, to be put in charge of an expedition to the north and west. The British Admiralty, notified by Sir Joseph Banks, eagerly accepted the plan. The wars were over and they had ships and men to spare. But they did not choose Scoresby. Instead they selected Captain John Ross and Lieutenant W. E. Parry, who sailed on 17 June 1818 in HMS *Isabella* and *Alexander*, each ship having a whaling master and mate aboard as 'experts'. (This became standard procedure for most subsequent expeditions.)

North of Disko, Ross came upon forty-five whaling ships, huddled near the edge of the Middle Ice. He pushed north, ramming his way through the pack, and the whalers followed until they came upon new pods of whale in the North Water. Ross sailed on, re-discovering Baffin's nearly forgotten discoveries, meeting the Polar Eskimos near Thule, so isolated, they thought themselves to be the only people on earth and asked Ross whether he came from the moon, but missing Lancaster Sound, thus leading to the next great voyage of discovery, in 1819 under Parry, who thought the sound existed.

The whalers were quick to take advantage of this

The dangers of the whale fishery as depicted in the book 'Recent Expeditions to the Polar Regions' published in London, 1852.



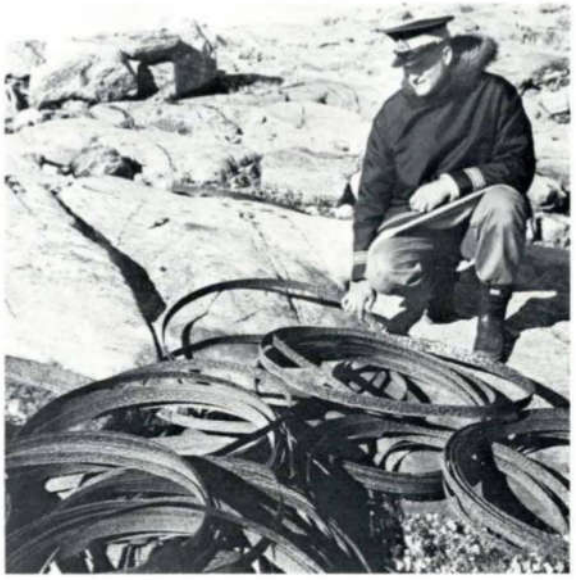
breach of the hitherto impenetrable Middle Pack barrier. In 1819, they pushed through the ice, but eleven were caught in its terrible nip and crushed. Undaunted, they returned and in 1820 Captain John in the *Cumbrian* sailed into Lancaster Sound and found the rich whaling ground near Pond Inlet, the 'West Water'. From then on, the voyages to the North Water and West Water became so regular, that the Polar Eskimos called the whalers *upernagdlit*—the bringers of spring—since they arrived in June with spring in Melville Bay.

A new whaling ground was like a new gold field. It meant instant wealth. Oil and baleen brought good prices. Ships were cheap. In 1803 a fully outfitted whaling ship in Britain cost £7,791, including £413 'Insurance against sea and enemy', and in 1791 the Nantucket ship *Beaver*, two hundred and forty tons, completely outfitted, was bought for $10,212. One good season would pay for ship and outfit, and a substantial dividend as well. Indeed it was a common saying among whalers that one good year could recoup the losses of six poor ones. In the late 19th century the baleen from a single bowhead would pay for an entire year's voyage.

Fortunes were made in whaling, but disaster, too, dogged the fleet that played nip and tuck with the mighty pack. In 1823, eight miles from Pond Inlet, forty-three ships were moored to the land floe. 'Here and there along the floe edge lay the dead bodies of hundreds of flenched whales'. In 1829, ninety-two ships from Britain were working their way through the ice. The next year ice closed in on the fleet. One by one the ships crumpled, as westerly gales drove the ice masses against their hulls. Finally nineteen ships were in splinters. Freed from the iron discipline aboard ship, more than 1,000 sailors looted the wrecks, got rip-roaring drunk and camped on the ice until rescued by other ships. All survived, and the year was long remembered as 'Baffin's Fair'. The owners were less amused. Their loss was £142,000. Altogether, more than five hundred ships are known to have been wrecked in the arctic regions west of Greenland.

Life on a whaler was grim. The crews were rough, the captains tough, and the conditions extremely hard. The crew was crammed into the tiny fo'c's'le, dank dark and verminous. The food was bad: 'salt horse' (dried salt-beef); 'dandy funk' (powdered hardtack and molasses); 'scouse' (stew of fat or pork and hardtack); and on Sundays 'plum duff', made of flour, drippings and raisins and boiled for hours. When a voyage lasted long, scurvy became rampant. In 1837 the *Dee* returned to Aberdeen with nine alive of a crew of forty-six, and the *Advice* to Dundee with seven survivors of a crew of forty-nine. Sometimes the crews mutinied, but whaling captains usually knew how to control their men, as witness this entry from a New England logbook: '. . . 14teen in mutiny and Capten Chase put 4 of them in casks and 6 in irons and 4 he tied up in the rigen'. The captains came prepared for trouble. Ship's provisions in 1870 included:

Rusty hoops at Fullerton survive from the days when whalers carried two tons of them, plus shooks and a busy cooper. A police post established there in 1903 proclaimed Canadian sovereignty to American whalers.



Whaling weapons from Blacklead Island are examined by J. Cummings, H B C Manager, Pangnirtung, 1966.

THE WHALING MUSEUM, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

A sketch of several of the thirty-four New Bedford ships trapped in the ice off Point Belcher in 1871. All aboard crowded into open boats and travelled eighty miles southwest where they were rescued (right) by seven whaling ships.

six dozen pain-killer; three dozen rat exterminator; and twelve pairs handcuffs.

In addition there was the hazard of the hunt. Dunkings in the icy water were frequent and unless fished out quickly, the men perished or suffered severe frostbite. Captain Scoresby hauled out a man 'his clothes frozen like mail, and his hair constituted a helmet of ice'. If they survived, they got a dram of rum.

The pay was poor. A 'greeney' (new hand) got £6 a year on a British ship; other men, depending on their station, were paid better and received in addition a bounty for each whale taken. American whalemen received no pay at all, but under the 'lay' system a share or 'lay' of the voyage's profit, usually a 13th lay for a captain and a 200th lay for a sailor before the mast. If the ship returned 'clean' (empty), each sailor got one dollar, sometimes for two or even three years' hard work. Yet to many it was a way of life. James Webster died aboard the famous whaler *Eclipse* in 1872, at the age of seventy-three. He had not missed an arctic whaling season since 1815.

The mid 19th century was the golden era of American whaling. In one year seven hundred and thirty-five American vessels (and two hundred and thirty British and European ones) were hunting whales around the globe, and in 1854, the best year, 10,074,866 gallons of bowhead oil and 3,445,200 pounds of baleen were brought home. Between 1840 and 1860 the average annual gross value of the United States whale catch was $8,000,000.

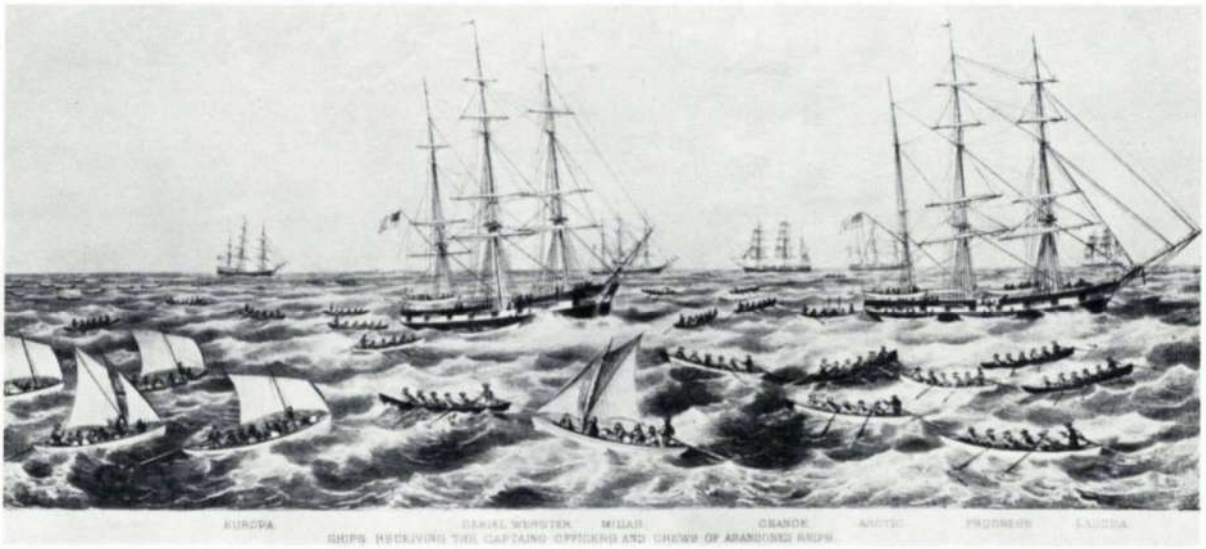
In Baffin Bay, the competition between American and British whalers became ever keener, as the number of whales decreased. All looked eagerly for new grounds and, when found, kept the secret jealously. Captain Lee in the *Prince of Wales* penetrated into Jones Sound in 1848 seeking whales and other whalers probed into the bays and inlets of Baffin Island, or sent their boats 'rock-nosing', working close to land far from the ships.

The Civil War in the States brought ruin to much of the whaling fleet (sixteen whaling ships were filled with rocks and this 'Stone Fleet' was scuttled in the harbours of Charleston and Savannah to prevent blockade running). It also sent oil and baleen prices soaring.

Nantucket and New Bedford whalers had discovered the Bering Sea, Kamchatka coast whaling grounds in 1843 and a few years later the masses of arctic bowhead wintering (and calving) in the Sea of Okhotsk. Then Captain James Royce of Sag Harbour sailed north through the strait discovered by Vitus Bering in 1728. In the Chukchi Sea he found whales in abundance and returned with a full ship. The rush was on. By 1852, two hundred and seventy-eight vessels were scouring the North Pacific and adjoining arctic seas for the great whales, making fortunes for their owners when they returned full. But often they did not return at all.

Off Point Belcher, on Alaska's north shore, thirty-four New Bedford ships were caught by the ice in 1871. Judging the situation hopeless, 1,219 men, women and children (American whaling captains often took their families along) crowded into open boats. After days of travelling through the ice, they were picked up by seven surviving ships of the whaling fleet and brought to Honolulu. Five years later, fifteen ships were gripped by the polar pack near Point Barrow and swept inexorably towards the north. Rather than risk the trip over buckling floes, some men preferred to stay in the ships. Neither they nor the ships were ever seen again. The others reached Point Barrow.

The lure of whales and wealth, though, was stronger than fear of polar ice. In '89, seven steam whalers squeezed through between the polar pack and the Alaska coast and emerged into the whale-rich Beaufort Sea. The next year the first whalers, the *Mary D. Hume* and the *Grampus* wintered at Herschel Island. It was a long cold winter, but the whalers learnt quickly from the



Eskimos. 'Before end of winter we all adopted native dress,' H. H. Bodfish, first mate of the *Mary D. Hume*, recalled. Their gamble paid off. From the end of July until September the men 'caught whales as fast as we could handle them'. The *Mary D. Hume* sailed for San Francisco, 5,000 miles away, with a cargo of oil and baleen worth $400,000. The *Grampus* did nearly as well.

The pattern had been set. The fleet sailed in March from San Francisco. In Bering Strait the whalers bought clothes from the Eskimos both on the Siberian and Alaskan coasts, five hundred to six hundred pairs of kamiks (sealskin boots) per ship at fifty cents each in trade goods, 'deerskin' (caribou) coats at two dollars each and squirrel-skin shirts at one dollar. They also bought dogs, thirty to fifty per ship. From open seams on the Alaska coast they mined coal, and took Eskimo helpers along from various coastal settlements. American whaling crews at this period were a mixed crowd: Negroes from Africa's west coast, Portuguese and Cape Verde Islanders, Japanese, Chinese, Arabs and, especially in the Pacific-Arctic fleet, an assortment of Hawaiians, Polynesians, Malays and Filipinos lumped together under the name of Kanakas.

The fleet wintered at Herschel or Baillie Islands. The ships were housed over with lumber and canvas and banked high with ten-foot thick walls of snow. Eskimos from far and wide hunted for the whalers, bringing in moose, mountain sheep and caribou at six cents a pound in trade goods. When five poorly provisioned ships and two hundred and fifty men were forced by adverse ice to winter at Herschel in 1905, the Eskimos hauled in 50,000 pounds of meat, consisting only of saddles and hind-quarters of animals, the rest being eaten by them or fed to their dogs.

When summer released the ships from their icy berths, they set out to look for whales, east to Banks Island, and west as far as Herald Island north of Siberia. Baleen was now selling for five dollars and more a pound, and a single whale was worth $10,000 to $15,000. The steamer *Narwhal* took sixty-three whales in thirty months. Fortunes were still being made. In addition, trade with the Eskimos was brisk. Most ships took twenty to thirty tons of trade goods along, to barter for clothes, meat, walrus ivory, and, increasingly, fox pelts. Then, in 1908, a substitute for baleen was found, its price fell from more than five dollars to less than two dollars, and western arctic whaling was finished. It had lasted a scant fifty years, yet its impact was felt long afterwards. It had taken out some $30,000,000 worth of whale products and left an evil legacy of disease (especially consumption and venereal disease, two common sailors' afflictions that decimated the native tribes), and a dependence upon white man's trading goods among the survivors.

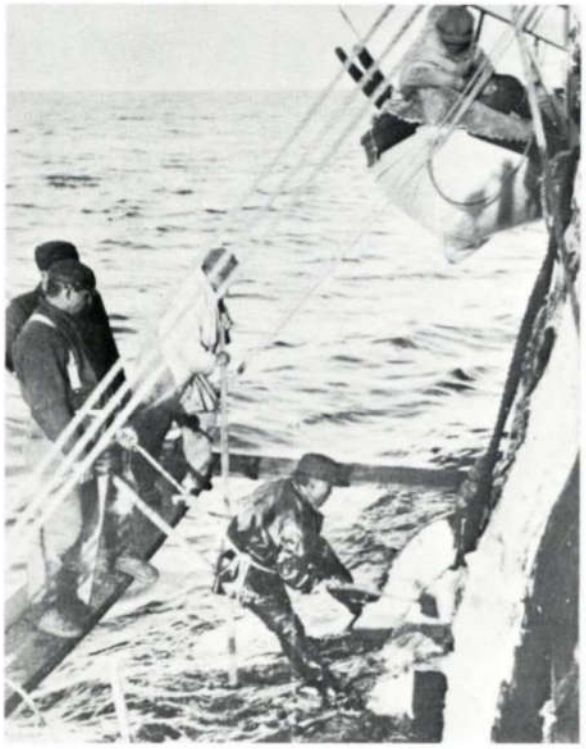
In the Eastern Arctic, the whalers' impact upon the native population was more prolonged, but less disastrous. There the Scots and a few American ships began to monopolize the trade in the latter part of the 19th century. In 1840 Captain William Penny explored Cumberland Sound and, after commanding one of the vessels taking part in the search for the missing Franklin expedition, returned and spent a winter there with the Eskimos. Captain Gray ventured deep into Pond Inlet in 1854 and found a new sound which he named after his ship *Eclipse*. Every bay was now being explored for whales and, since risks were great and returns precarious, sealing was added to insure profits. Some forty-two British ships took two hundred and eighteen whales and 50,000 seals in 1849. The next year, 400,000 seals were slaughtered.

Dr John Rae, travelling through Roes Welcome Sound in 1846 and 1854 reported great schools of whales from this area. As he passed Marble Island, 'We saw upward of a dozen Greenland whales . . . some of them very large.'

Eskimo families in the after cabin of the whaler 'Era', whose captain employed about seventy native people at Fullerton in 1903.

THE WHALING MUSEUM, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

An Eskimo employed as overboard man on the schooner 'Polar Bear'.



THE WHALING MUSEUM, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

The Hudson's Bay Company had much earlier operated a bowhead fishery in this region. From 1764 to 1772, its men hunted whales in the vicinity of Marble Island. Although some whales were taken, the results were hardly what the company expected. It lost £20,000 and abandoned the venture.

Captain E. A. Chapel and his brother, both from New England, followed up Rae's report and in 1860 returned with $60,000 worth of whale products from Roes Welcome Sound. Four years later fifteen ships were exploiting this new whaling ground, only two hundred miles long (roughly from Rankin Inlet to Repulse Bay) and quite narrow. Marble Island, of grim repute (the 1719 Knight expedition had perished there) and later Fullerton became the wintering places for the New England whalers, while the Scots preferred Repulse Bay.

The Scots were now using exclusively steam ships, three-hundred to four-hundred-ton vessels, built of hardwood throughout (mainly oak) and sheathed with greenheart. Between the interior timber and the shell was a layer of rock salt, to cushion the crushing blows of the ice, bringing the hull's total thickness to eighteen to twenty-four inches. Even this was powerless against the grip of the pack ice and each year one or more ships failed to return. Some ships, though, seemed to have a charmed life. The *Truelove*, built in Philadelphia in 1764, sailed the world's oceans for one hundred and twenty years, including seventy-two years of arctic whaling.

Scots and Americans had entirely different whaling methods. The Scots were ship-based and hunted mainly in the vicinity of their ships, with crews from Scotland and the Shetland and Orkney Islands. The American whalers sailed north (in the latter part of the 19th century) with relatively few men and, arrived at the eastern arctic whaling grounds, recruited Eskimos to fill out the hunting crews. During the winters the Eskimos were kept busy supplying the ships with fresh meat, to augment meagre rations, and stave off scurvy. In the present Keewatin area Eskimos supplied with guns and ammunition by the whalers wiped out whole herds of muskoxen until only a few remained far from the sea, and they killed vast numbers of caribou.

Life for the whalers was not one of unmitigated hardship. Unlike merchantmen, who despised whalers and called them 'spouters' or 'hell ships' (because of their spectral appearance when tryworks were blazing at night), the whalers had, between hunts and while wintering, a great deal of leisure time. They held dances, staged plays and played football whenever ice and captains permitted. On a foggy day in 1875, the men of the *Victor* were having a great game on Baffin Bay ice, when suddenly a polar bear joined them, eagerly chasing the sealskin ball. He had, in seconds, the field to himself.

Whaling books were mostly written by rather puritanical New England and Scottish whaling officers, who primly refer to the 'cordial' relations existing between whalers and natives. They were indeed most cordial.

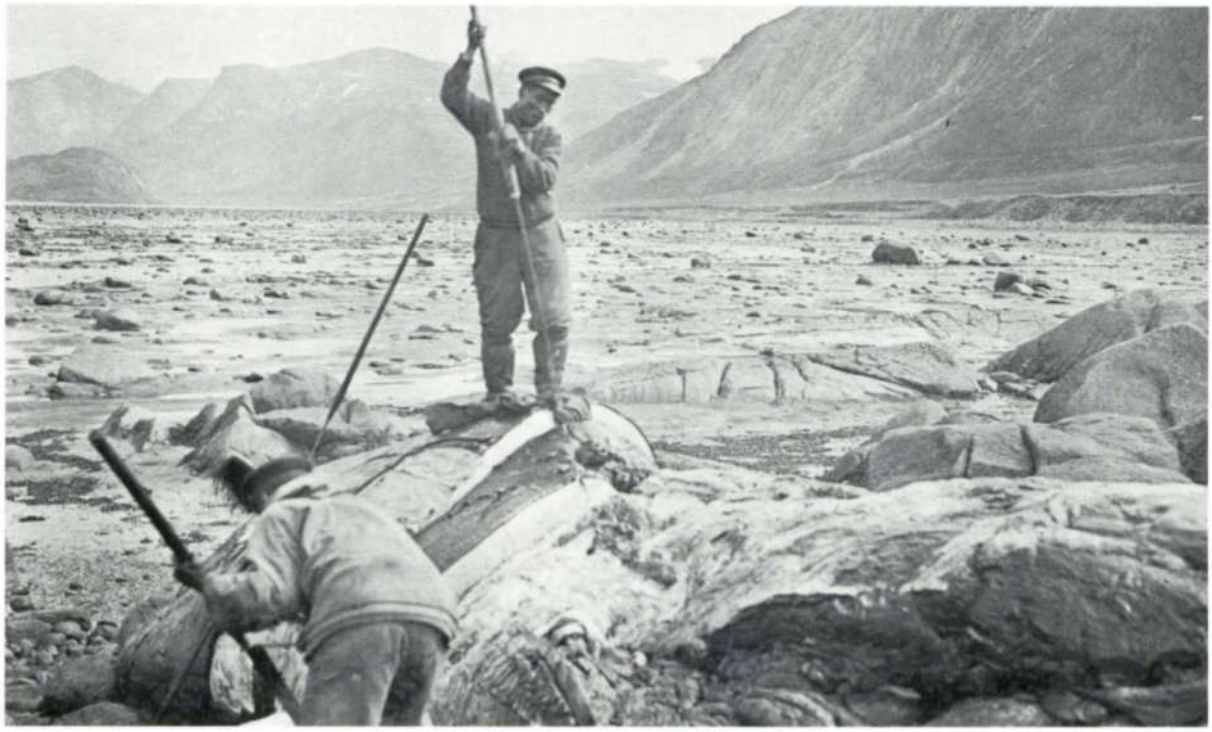
There must be few Eskimos in the Eastern or Western Arctic who do not count a whaler among their ancestors. George Anderson, writing in *The Beaver* (March 1947) said: 'It is doubtful if there is a racially pure Eskimo in the area' (of Cumberland Sound).

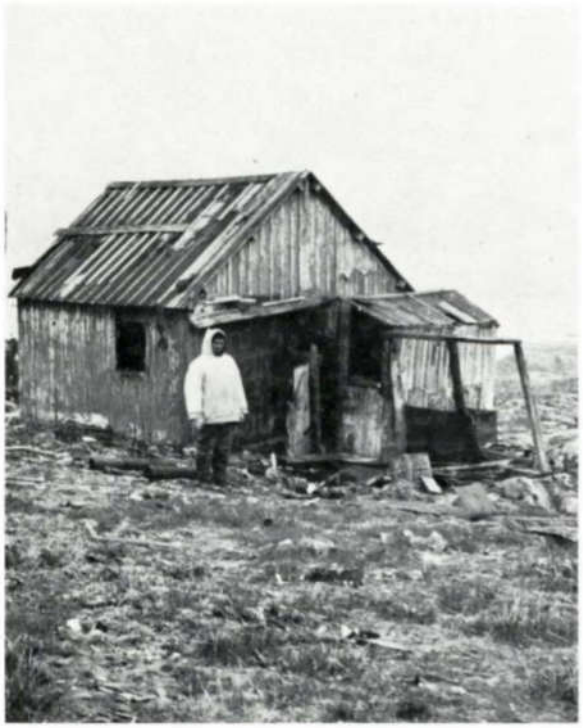
As in the west, the sailors' diseases took a devastating toll of the native population, which had little resistance to 'foreign' diseases. Mumps or measles could be fatal and whole camps were wiped out. In 1895 the *Terra Nova*, came across the bodies of thirty men, women and children at Dexterity Bay on northern Baffin Island which had previously been visited by other whalers. There was not a single survivor. A few years later, the whaler *Active* left its mate and two men on Southampton Island to organize a coastal whaling station, and resultant disease annihilated the Sadlermiut tribe, an Eskimo group some scientists suspect to be the last survivors of Dorset culture people. To replace the Sadlermiut, whalers brought Aivilik Eskimos to Southampton Island in 1908.

By early 1900 bowhead whales had become extremely rare in the Eastern Arctic. Shore stations had been established at Kekerten Island and Blacklead Island in Cumberland Sound by Scots and, a bit further south, by the Americans at New Haven, on Cyrus Field Bay. The Scots had another station much farther north on Bylot Island, near Pond Inlet. At the stations, Eskimos, under the supervision of two or three whites, did all the whaling with boats supplied by the whalers. (These were sturdy craft, twenty-eight to thirty feet long, double-ended if American, with a small sternboard if Scottish. Some were still used in the Pangnirtung area twenty-five years ago. Wherever they were introduced, they quickly replaced the native umiak and kayak.) In addition to whaling and picking up the proceeds from their shore stations, whaling masters now had to use every resource available to make a profit. Thus in 1904 the *Active* sailed for home with a cargo consisting of two bowhead whales, sixty-nine belugas (white whales), thirty-eight walrus, fifty-two seals,

Captain C. T. Pederson who took his first whale off Baillie Island in 1900 photographed baleen being hoisted aboard and laid out on deck.

C. T. PEDERSON





Eskimos who learnt the art from whalers in the Cumberland Gulf years earlier, strip blubber from a half-grown Greenland whale at Pangnirtung Fiord. The scene and the abandoned oil tanks and whalers' house in Cumberland Sound were photographed in 1946 by George Anderson, then H B C manager at Pangnirtung.

thirty-two bearskins, one hundred and fifty-eight fox pelts, thirty muskox hides, one gyrfalcon, and fifteen tons of mica, the latter from a mine on the north shore of Hudson Strait.

A. P. Low, who visited the whaling stations in 1903-1904, with the Canadian government ship *Neptune*, partly to explore but mainly to establish Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic, reported the whaling prospects as 'gloomy'. Everywhere he found the natives greatly dependent upon the whalers for those white men's goods without which they could no longer live, mainly guns and ammunition. At Cumberland Sound, Low noted, five hundred Eskimos derived their living from the whale hunt and trade. 'There is no doubt that the withdrawal of the whalers would lead to great hardships and many deaths amongst these people', he wrote. His prediction would have been amply fulfilled had not the establishment of posts by the Hudson's Bay Company and other traders, filled the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the whalers.

In connection with Canada's efforts to establish the idea of her sovereignty over the Canadian Arctic through this *Neptune* expedition, and the subsequent expeditions of Captain Bernier, it is interesting to note the whalers' idea of sovereignty. As far as they were concerned, the entire Arctic was *terra nullius*, it belonged to nobody and everybody and, except at Spitsbergen, no attempt was made to establish exclusive national whaling grounds or rights. With this supranational concept, the Eskimos, curiously enough, concurred. They lacked a possessive feeling for the land and its resources. Both belonged to all. Since this was an ingrained tradition, they never seem to have resented the intrusion of the whalers, nor the ruthless exploitation of their land.

In 1904 Low had already noted 'only the high price of whalebone (baleen) keeps the industry alive'. By 1908, a synthetic substitute for it had been found, and the price plummeted. Whaling in the Western Arctic ceased. In the east, though, the Scots hung on tenaciously, sealing, trading, killing the odd whale and many walrus, mining mica and collecting the proceeds from their shore stations. The ships were all from Dundee and one reason their owners could continue was because this city needed the whale oil for its thriving jute industry. But the end was near. The whales had been nearly exterminated (bowhead whales are only now beginning to make a very slow come-back), the walrus colonies decimated, musk-oxen had vanished from much of their range and mica mining showed hardly any profit. In 1913 two whalers the *Morning* and the *Balaena* left Dundee. Both came home clean. The next year the whaler *Active* returned without seeing a whale. After three hundred years, arctic whaling, which had brought wealth to many but death and disaster to more, was finally and irrevocably finished.◆

Arctic poppies sheltered by a piece of whale bone at Milne Inlet, Baffin Island.

Was this Hearne's Thelewey-aza-yeth?

BY ERIC MORSE

Photos by the author

SAMUEL HEARNE took off from Fort Prince of Wales (Churchill, Manitoba) on 7 December 1770. An important exploration could hardly have begun less pretentiously. Hearne was a young man, just 25, setting out with a motley band of Chipewyan Indians—wives, children and dogs included—captained by their chief Matonabbee who had promised the Hudson's Bay Company Governor to guide young Hearne to reputed copper mines near the mouth of the Coppermine River. The party walked, later snowshoed, along the Indian track leading westward to near the present site of Fort Smith on Slave River. The prime objective of the journey lay far to the north of this track, but Matonabbee kept heading westward, for in winter they had to keep within or near the trees, where there were wood and—at that season—caribou. Only when they reached a certain point nearly 600 miles west of Hudson Bay did they turn north. On his way back a year later, after a big loop from the mouth of the Coppermine, Hearne returned to this spot and picked up his former trail.

The point where Hearne left the east-west track and right-angled north was the keystone in the arch of his journey. Its uniqueness was related to both terrain and supply.

The general area crossed by Hearne on his fabulous trip of exploration, which lay mostly in the Barren Lands and treeline zone, remained virtually otherwise unexplored till the turn of this century. The region stayed largely unmapped till the systematic air survey and mapping which began in the nineteen-twenties. Only gradually over the past sixty years, beginning with Dr J. B. Tyrrell's distinguished editing of Hearne's *Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort to the Northern Ocean* in the Champlain Society series in 1911, have the main gaps in Hearne's track been filled in. His route has for some years now been fairly accurately traceable—except in the area where he turned north for the Coppermine in April 1771 and to which he returned a year later. This crossroads was at a lake Hearne called by its Indian name, Thelewey-aza-yeth, whose location has remained a mystery—though more a question of conjecture than of controversy.

The Arctic explorer, Dr (later Sir) John Richardson, in a 'Digression concerning Hearne's Route' included in Sir George Back's *Narrative* (1836), mentioned that 'The next place, whose position it is very desirable to ascertain, is Thelew-ey-aze-yeth, or Little Fish Hill', pointing out its importance as forming the junction of three branches of Hearne's route. However, Dr Richardson merely guessed at its proper latitude, and suggested it lay somewhere south of Artillery Lake. Dr Tyrrell in a footnote in the Champlain Society edition of Hearne's *Journey* (1911) said simply, 'The exact location of this lake (Thelewey-aza-yeth) has not yet been determined'.

The Beaver in June 1949 carried a scholarly article by Dr J. Tuzo Wilson on Hearne's baffling mapping of his journey, entitled 'New Light on Hearne'. Dr Wilson, while making no special case for it, suggested that Alcantara Lake 'fitted very well' Thelewey-aza-yeth's description. In the succeeding issue of *The Beaver*, September 1949, Guy Blanchet writing of his rugged exploration of the upper Abitau and Dubawnt Rivers took occasion to discount Alcantara, and made a strong case for Thelewey-aza-yeth being the northern lobe of Labyrinth Lake.

My own interest in this riddle was aroused by repeated crossings of Hearne's route throughout the Barren Lands and also by the obvious incongruity of but a single remaining question-mark when everything else on the route seemed to have locked into place. With the good-scale, contoured topographical maps which had become available since 1949 and a prized first edition of Hearne's book in front of me, I sat down one winter weekend to attack the problem, and it became a detective story. I listed Hearne's various clues: his somewhat shaky mileages, his travel times, his quite detailed description of Thelewey-aza-yeth itself, and what he recorded as lying to the east and to the north of it. I weighed these against what I had already seen of the terrain and similar country I had travelled through. Only then did I search the maps. Behold there *was* a lake which fitted all the clues. Flying north for a canoe trip in July this year on a charter flight from Uranium City, I dropped down on this lake to examine the physical evidence.

On the ancient east-west Indian track from present Churchill to present Fort Smith the two known points nearest to Thelewey-aza-yeth are the source of the Dubawnt River to the east and Hill Island Lake to the west. Map reference to these two points and to Hearne's journal leaves no question that Hearne's 'Thelewey-aza River' (with his various spellings of it) is the modern Thoa; it flows into Hill Island Lake (so identified first by Dr Charles Camsell in 1914). The Thoa River, rising almost within hailing distance of the Dubawnt, flanks the direct line, but arches north of it.

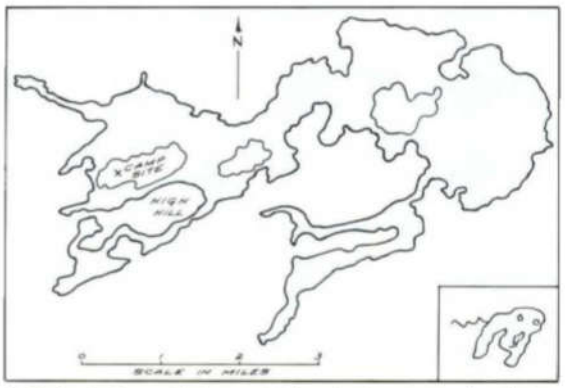
Left: a section of the camping ground on the island.

Delight Lake, looking south over the island campsite with part of the high hill at left across the water.

Specifically, Hearne in his journal speaks of arriving on 8 April 1771, 'at a *small* Lake, called Thelewey-aza-yeth; . . . meaning . . . Little Fish Hill: probably so called from a *high hill* which stands *on a long point* near the *West end* of the Lake.' (The italics are mine.) There is a small lake, six miles by three, on the Hill Island Lake sheet (75 C) of the 1:250,000 topographical series, at latitude 60° 35′, longitude 108° 15′ W, in a straight line between Hill Island Lake and the source area of the Dubawnt River, and exactly half way between them. The modern name is Delight Lake. Projecting from its west end is a long (1½ mile) peninsula tipped by a high (over 250 feet) hill which, because it drops straight down to the water, dominates and gives character to the lake. Careful examination of large-scale maps on Hearne's line of march in the region reveals no other hill or lake even approaching his detailed description.

Hearne goes on to say that '. . . on the eighteenth we moved about nine or ten miles to the North North West, and then came to a tent of Northern Indians . . . on the North side of the Thelewey-aza River', the modern Thoa. The shortest actual distance from the campsite on Delight Lake to the north bank of the Thoa is exactly ten miles, and the direction is NNW.

In checking out Delight Lake's plausibility, the two real tests, determinable only by a visit to the lake, were to examine: first, whether its soil and climatic conditions produced what the Indians were looking for, a supply of birch; and, second, whether somewhere near a peninsula so described there was an island offering tenting accommodation for a horde of seventy. In Hearne's words, 'On an island in this Lake we pitched our tents, . . . my companions were busily employed in preparing small staves of birch-wood . . . Birch-rind, together with timbers and other wood-work for building canoes, were also another object of the Indians' attention while at this place.'



Delight Lake, with largest islands, from an air photo and, inset, Thelewey-aza-yeth from Hearne's own map.

Approaching from the south, I was surprised to note from the air that the general area had so little sign of birch. However, the shores at the western end of Delight Lake, within a mile or so of the peninsula described, turned out to be well clothed with birch of respectable size, the hills cupping about and offering a warm, sunny pocket. As for a campsite, I had been sceptical of finding in rocky terrain one of such generous proportions as to

A head-on view of the high hill and long point on Delight Lake, looking west up the bay with the campsite island on the right.

accommodate seventy people. On our plane's initial tight-banked turn around the hill on the long point I found myself looking straight down on an ideal campsite which could comfortably tent an army—and it was on an island, separated from the peninsula and hill by only a narrow channel. There was a low, flat plateau covered with a heavy carpet of yellowish caribou moss among sparse spruce. It would be a particularly good campsite in winter, when the menace was blizzard not bugs.

Hearne goes on to say that, when a few days later they went on to join the Indians who were tenting by the Thelewey-aza River, they found 'plenty of good birch'. I noticed from the air that the broad, sandy valley of the Thoa River where Hearne appears to have crossed it had as much birch as the west end of Delight Lake.

Though it seems unnecessary in the light of the above to argue the unsuitability of Alcantara Lake for consideration, it might be mentioned in passing that Alcantara, eighteen miles long, can hardly be called 'small'; as a narrow lake with a NNE-SSW axis it cannot really be said to have a 'west end'; the lake in any case lacks a long point with a high hill. Even more convincing, Hearne from Thelewey-aza-yeth headed northward to reach the Thoa (Thelewey-aza) River, whereas Alcantara lies already north of that river.

As for Guy Blanchet's espousal of Labyrinth as the lake in question, one can only surmise that he wrote chiefly with the evidence of vegetation and Indian artifacts in mind, overlooking much of Hearne's narrative and descriptions. Labyrinth Lake would fail to account for several days of travel in Hearne's *Journey*. The modern large-scale topographical map (Abitau Lake, sheet 75 D in the 1:250,000 series) published since Blanchet wrote, moreover, does not conform to his sketch map and descriptions: there is no long point in the area he indicates. What Blanchet showed in his sketch turns out to be, not a point, but a narrow isthmus—in fact, an esker cut by a creek; there is no high hill on it.

Like Kelsey's bad verse, which nurtured much of the subsequent fiction and guesswork about his route, so also has Hearne's bad mapping led to speculation and error. Dr Richardson's and Dr Tuzo Wilson's interesting observations suggest that Hearne—chivvied and castigated by critics like Dalrymple—indefensibly 'cooked' his later maps to cover his tracks, thus masking inconsistencies of latitude and longitude. Instead, he could easily have pleaded the difficulties of fatigue, haste, and a primitive, damaged quadrant (later lost).

Hearne's map in its various contemporary editions, then, can be written off as of minimal use in assessing the fine points of his route. However, with the sufficiency of identifiable landmarks and the names which have now been carried over to modern maps, a careful cross-checking of his *Journey* makes it possible to read his course with reasonable accuracy. One needs to start with a few known points and to introduce modern mileages.

The sketch map opposite is intended to illustrate Hearne's probable route between the area just east of Fort Smith and Wholdaia Lake. The four key points are separated by the approximate cumulative modern mileages shown at the left.

0 Largepike Lake (50 mi due E. of Fort Smith)
40 Hill Island Lake
160 Labyrinth Lake
240 N.W. bay of Wholdaia Lake

In speaking of Hearne's own mileages we have to record the caveat he voices in anguish: 'I cannot suffi-

ciently lament the loss of my quadrant, as the want of it must render the course of my journey . . . very uncertain; and my watch stopping while I was at the Athapuscow [Great Slave] Lake, has contributed greatly to the misfortune, as I am now deprived of every means of estimating the distances which we walked with any degree of accuracy, . . . ' Hearne's mileages cannot, however, be so far out, for they accord with Indians' general, known rate of travel: geared to the pace of toddlers, or of dogs dragging travois, a party of Indian families on foot rarely averages more than six or eight miles a day, sometimes less.

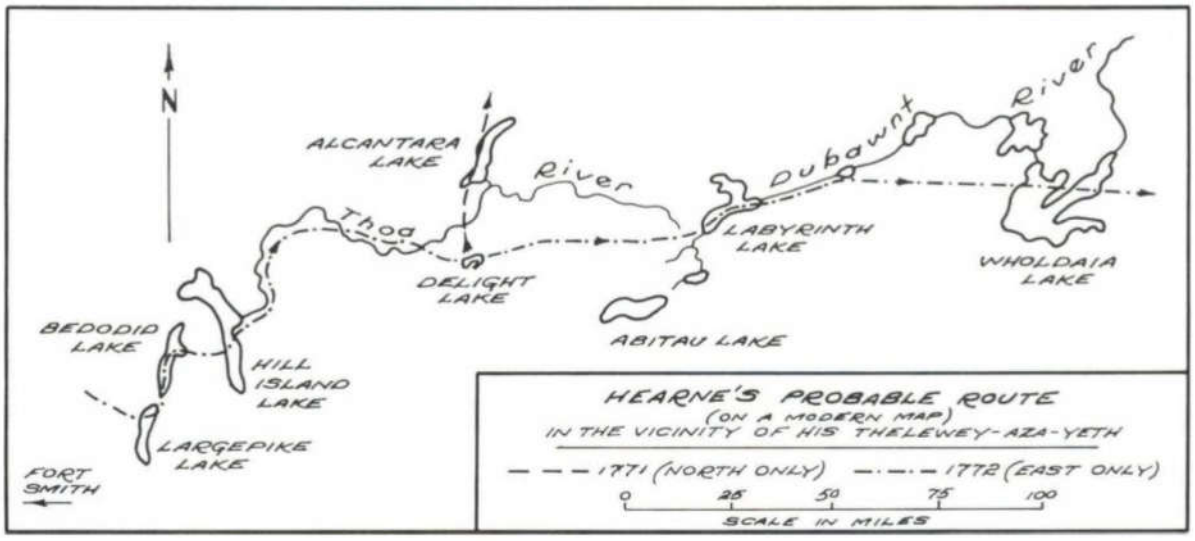
From Largepike Lake to Hill Island Lake, with the spring thaw starting, progress was very slow, averaging no more than four miles a day. At Hill Island Lake the party was held up by a four-day gale. The Thoa River valley which they next entered was good winter caribou range, and ten days were taken off to hunt and to dress and dry meat. There was nothing else special that Hearne records about this section. It is typical Shield country in thin boreal forest, enabling the party to cut off a couple of the Thoa's big bends. Hearne speaks of crossing the river twice, on 7 and 14 April. On 29 April he notes passing by 'Theleweyaza Yeth, the place at which we had prepared wood-work for canoes' the previous year.

In passing from Thelewey-aza-yeth over to the Dubawnt River, the party crossed a great highland, in fact at 1,700 feet in spots probably the highest land Hearne crossed, the roof-tree of the whole vast area between Hudson Bay and the Slave River. On this continental divide Hearne would be passing streams that flowed into both the Mackenzie and Hudson Bay. He indicates that they came on this highland within a day's walking from Thelewey-aza-yeth, which again would accord with the situation of Delight Lake. His cited direction of march also accords. Here Hearne wrote of being caught in a blizzard on a 'high barren hill, a considerable distance from any woods'. Blanchet, writing of reaching this plateau by way of the Abitau River said: 'Here at last we were on the top. It was evident from our elevation . . . that Abitau Lake [20 miles southwest of Labyrinth] lay on the summit of one of the great moraines left by the retreating glaciers.' Hearne would appear to have walked along the height of land just north of Abitau Lake. On the highland, the party was moving faster; Hearne speaks of walking 'briskly', making 'good days' journies'. They attained an average of eight miles a day.

On 11 May they pitched their tents 'by the side of a river that empties itself into Doo-baunt Lake'. It is of interest to speculate just where this first contact with the Dubawnt was made; a complication is that they took to the river, walking on the ice, from this point. From wherever it was, Hearne took five days to pass the northwest bay of Wholdaia Lake. His rate of travel here was averaging fifteen miles a day, since the men had separated from their families. With three of the five days spent walking on the Dubawnt and its lakes, one can assume that the distance covered would be 40 to 45 miles. The point where they cut away from the Dubawnt and headed for Wholdaia is fairly obvious, so the above basis for conjecture suggests that Hearne first hit the Dubawnt somewhere near the west end of Labyrinth Lake.

Though Labyrinth was on his route, its identification with Thelewey-aza-yeth is ruled out by Hearne's clear account of travelling eastward, 29 April to 11 May, from Thelewey-aza-yeth *to* the Dubawnt. Labyrinth Lake is already on and well down the Dubawnt.

Paradoxically, with all Hearne's cartographical monstrosities, his depiction of Thelewey-aza Yeth as it appears on his original map in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company is quite close in outline to Delight Lake. This was one place where Hearne would have had plenty of time, while the Indians gathered birch, to make a survey and draw a map. ◆



NORTHERN BOOKS

MAPPING THE FRONTIER

Charles Wilson's Diary of the Survey of the 49th Parallel, 1858-1862, while Secretary of the British Boundary Commission.
Edited and with an introduction by George F. G. Stanley. Macmillan of Canada, Toronto, 1970. 182 pages. $7.95

Reviewed by Irene M. Spry

This welcome addition to the growing store of first-hand early records of the Canadian West to appear in print concerns a little known and fascinating episode. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 had settled that the Boundary from the crest of the Rocky Mountains to the Strait of Georgia should run along the 49th parallel—not 54°40′, as President Polk had demanded—but a decade had passed and the Line had not yet been run. At last, stimulated to action by the prospect of the Fraser River gold rush, the governments of Great Britain and the United States of America agreed upon a joint Boundary Commission. The American party took the field in 1857 under the leadership of Chief Commissioner Archibald Campbell. The British land party arrived in Vancouver Island in July, 1858, with Captain (later General Sir) John Hawkins, R.E. in charge and Lieutenant Charles W. Wilson, R.E. as secretary, his first overseas posting.

In this volume Professor Stanley has given us the delightful diary that Wilson kept for the amusement of his sister, Fanny. As editor he has contributed a most useful preface and introduction, explaining the troubled history of a boundary line that, as he points out, is 'topographically absurd', but has survived a century and a half. His enlightening comments and notes concern the *personae dramatis*, the character and progress of the Commission's work, the complications and difficulties that had to be surmounted, the delicate relationship between the two national commissions, the lost report of the Commission, and the various books published by others of its members. Interestingly enough, his work on the diary involved a sea-to-sea operation. The preface is dated Mount Allison University, in New Brunswick, while the manuscript that provides the substance of the volume is in the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, in Victoria, together with some watercolour sketches that accompanied the diary but are not, sadly enough, reproduced with it.

The publication opens with Wilson's arrival at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and closes with his arrival back in England. In the interval he carried out four years of gruelling work in charge of records and accounts for the British Commission; organizing its supplies and provisions; coping with labour problems (including a strike among the axemen); and acting as 'Money Chief'.

A start was made on the survey west of the Cascade Mountains, where, after a break at Victoria during the winter, work was continued through 1859. The beauty of the country was impressive but the difficulties it presented were formidable. They included drenching rain, agonizing and overwhelming mosquitoes (that actually killed some mules); a rugged and unknown terrain, with dismal swamps, precipitous mountains, flooding rivers; almost impenetrable forests and underbrush; and forest fires. The party had to construct their own trails, boats and bridges as they went along, as 'everything is in its wildest state here'. Their only predecessors were Indians and Hudson's Bay Company personnel. In spite of arduous days and sleepless nights, Wilson's lively interest never failed in new experiences, in the magnificent scenery, in the wildlife, and in the Indians, with whom he established a sympathetic relationship. He and his colleagues contrived to keep cheerful through all their hardships, but they were happy to get back to Victoria, to comfortable quarters, for a little relaxation, especially as they revelled in the kindly society of the local people, with whom they enjoyed dinners, impromptu dancing parties (with Scotch reels and Irish jigs to the tune of an old gentleman's fiddle), amateur concerts and an occasional ball, notably one given by Wilson and his colleague, Captain Haig, R.A., in co-operation with the explorer, John Palliser, then on his way back to England. With James Hector (Palliser's geologist and naturalist) Wilson struck up a great friendship. A more sombre side of life in Victoria appears in the mention of the deaths of several of the men serving with the Commission and occasional trouble with the Indians.

In April 1860 the Commission moved its base from Victoria to the Columbia River, since it was easier to get supplies to survey parties along the Boundary east of the Cascades from the American than from the British side. Wilson's responsibilities involved him here, too, in continual travelling. With his usual eager interest he continued to observe and record the scenery, fauna and flora and human beings around him. His comments are gay and lively; they are also shrewd and revealing. The diary is a kaleidoscope of interesting historical material, carefully observed and vividly recorded: material about the various Indian tribes he encountered; about minerals and mining—both coal and gold; about the climate and topographical and geological formations; about fish and animals; and about the people he met, including the few women who had penetrated that then remote wilderness—notably an enterprising English woman who had crossed the mountains on her way to set up an inn at Rock Creek 'in all the grandeur of the most expensive crinoline'! There is so much useful detail that a more complete index would have been very welcome. There are three helpful maps and an admirable photograph of Wilson in his working outfit. Altogether this is a book to enjoy and a book to use.

Mrs Spry is associate professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Ottawa. Following publication of her most recent book 'The Palliser Expedition 1857-1860' she edited and wrote a scholarly introduction to 'The Papers of the Palliser Expedition' published by The Champlain Society.

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B. A. JOHNSTONE

Hoarfrost in the glow of early morning along the banks of the Red River

ALASKA: PAST AND PRESENT

By Clarence C. Hulley. Binfords & Mort, Portland, Oregon, 1970. 477 pages, illus, maps. US $10.

WHEN RUSSIA WAS IN AMERICA

The Alaska Boundary Treaty Negotiations 1824-25 and the Role of Pierre de Poletica

By Mykhaylo Huculak. Mitchell Press, Vancouver, B.C., 1971. 149 pages, illus, map. $6.95

Reviewed by Richard A. Pierce

The slow earlier development of Alaska, the recurrent boom and bust of more recent times, and the problems and prospects of its fast-moving modern era mirrors conditions and events in other sub-Arctic and Arctic lands and is hence of more than local interest. *Alaska: Past and Present*, a third edition of *Alaska, 1741-1953*, now revised, enlarged, and retitled, provides a reliable history of this region, the only one available which brings the reader up-to-date.

Of the 370 pages of text in the 1953 edition, the first 346 are reproduced unchanged. They cover the Russian period, the voyages of discovery, the maritime fur trade, sale to the United States in 1867, exploration, early missions and schools, the gold stampedes, problems of industry, transportation, government, and taxation, experiments with reindeer raising and agriculture, and the changes brought by World War II.

For the later period, the author has reworked his chapter 'The Post-War Years, 1946-1952, and has added four others which, under the headings of 'Statehood', 'Land', 'Industry and Defense', and 'Modern Problems and Progress', touch on practically everything that has happened since. So rapid is the pace of events, however, that even this recent treatment antedates the transformation of former-Governor Walter Hickel into a conservation-minded Secretary of the Interior (later forced to resign), the gathering storm over pollution, the pipeline controversy, or the nuclear explosions on Amchitka.

The bibliography of the earlier editions remains virtually unchanged, although some worthwhile newer works might have been cited; and only a heterogeneous thirty-five items have been added for the post-1953 period. The author observes that the great amount of material published in the past fifteen years precluded a more extensive list, but two or three pages of well-selected titles for this period would have maintained the standard set by the earlier bibliography and would have been of greater use than the curious but not particularly germane account of a Russian-American Company project for an establishment in Haiti, placed in the appendix.

When Russia was in America is concerned mainly with 'the international rivalry on the Northwest Coast of North America in the latter half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries'. This is too large an order and the effort to bring in other issues as well leads to difficulties in organization. The introduction, for example, takes up the relationship of Ukraine to Moscow, and its thwarted nationhood, a subject which, whatever the reader's sympathies, has little to do with the Northwest Coast. Chapter I, undertaking to tell the complex story of Russian, British, American, Spanish and Hudson's Bay Company activities on the Northwest Coast, is very sketchy. Nor is the author sufficiently critical, presenting for example the dubious story of how in 1571 a group of Russians fleeing from Ivan the Terrible made their way to Alaska; and the unfounded theory that an early settlement (perhaps founded by the fugitives) existed on one of the rivers near Cape Prince of Wales (see Dorothy Jean Ray, 'Kauwerak, lost village of Alaska,' *The Beaver*, Autumn 1964, pp. 4-13, for discussion of this problem).

Chapter II is devoted to Alexander I's Ukase of 1821, in which Russia attempted to bar foreign trading vessels from its North American and Siberian shores. Chapters III and IV deal with subsequent negotiations which led to the conventions of 1824 and 1825 with the United States and Great Britain, limiting Russian aspirations in the New World and shaping the present Alaska-Canadian boundary. These chapters contain interesting, although hardly new material. The texts of the two conventions might better have been placed in the appendix, along with biographical sketches of diplomats involved in the dispute, found in Chapter V.

Of particular interest is the biographical data assembled on Pierre de Poletica, a little-known figure, of Ukrainian origin, who served as an envoy to the United States and later was one of the negotiators in the deliberations leading to the conventions.

There is a bibliography (unfortunately some of the citations are incomplete), an index, and a map.

Professor Pierce who is in the department of history at Queen's University specializes in history of Russia, Alaska and the Aleutians.

MAKPA

The Story of an Eskimo-Canadian boy

By Margery Hinds. Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1971. 141 pp. illus. $4.95

'Arctic Bay is inside the Arctic Circle; that's why there is no sun in winter. But it's not pitch dark all the time . . .'

Once the author has established in the opening chapters that this is a book for children, she slips into a more relaxed style and tells about Makpa with flashes of the humour that have brightened her earlier books on the North.

The story line is slight; it serves as a frame for the author's considerable knowledge of the Arctic scene some fifteen years ago. The young reader, accustomed to fast-moving, climactic television drama may find 'Makpa' low-key entertainment. If he stays with it, he will gain surprising insight into life in an Eastern Arctic Eskimo community. —*H. Burgess*

SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN HERITAGE:

THE FIRST TWO HUNDRED CENTURIES

By Zenon Pohorecky. Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1970, 54 pages, illustrated. $2.00.

Reviewed by Chris Vickers

This booklet on the prehistory and ethnography of Saskatchewan is a welcome addition to our western literature on the Indian. Presented in language the average reader can understand, it reveals much of what has happened in the central prairie province in the past.

The range of time covered is deep. Starting with the Ice Age, Professor Pohorecky carries the reader forward with text and illustration into the historic period. The maps of tribal movements are excellent; the drawings of projectile points, pottery types and historic objects will be helpful to

the amateur archaeologist; and the author has not neglected the art of the Indian, or the rich gifts he has contributed to our civilization.

One of the interesting sections of the booklet covers the first explorers. The author outlines the early journey of Henry Kelsey, then lets Anthony Henday tell his own story of the journey across Saskatchewan and into Alberta with extracts from his journal between 31 July 1754 and 30 May 1755. The author has annotated many of the journal entries, enabling the reader to follow Henday's route across the plains. Henday's journal has great value for the ethnologist because it provides information on the Assiniboine, Blackfoot and other Plains tribes 'as they lived over 200 years ago'. This section is richly illustrated with pictures and two maps.

Many professional archaeologists will question the author's Saskatoon Site. There is not any doubt the bones recovered were those of a mammoth, but there is likely to be long debate on whether the 'stone tools' associated with the mammoth were made by man. The inclusion of Sandia type points dated at 20,000 years old is also questionable. The distribution of Sandia points is extremely limited, with only one questionable specimen from Saskatchewan. Gordon R. Willey states: 'No reliable radiocarbon dates have yet been established on either the Folsom or Sandia level of the Sandia Cave . . .' He goes on to say: 'For the present, the Sandia point is best considered an early offshoot of the more general line of the Big-Game Hunting tradition, and one which is known only from central New Mexico.' (An Introduction to American Archaeology, Vol. 1, pp., 41 and 42.) It is difficult to ignore Willey and the authorities he relies upon: perhaps Professor Pohorecky should take about 8,000 years off the age he estimates for the rare Sandia points.

Retired newspaper editor, Mr Vickers maintains his interest in anthropology, archaeology, and western history.

FACE OF MY PEOPLE

By P. B. Fransen, O.M.I. Obtainable from Eskimo Museum, Box 10, Churchill, Manitoba. 1971. $3.00

Here is an appealing collection of photographs of Eskimos of the Eastern Arctic, photographs of the dog-team and drum dance rather than the motor toboggan and juke-box era.

Father Fransen, whose present mission is in Rankin Inlet, has spent eighteen years in the Arctic, serving at a number of settlements.

Apart from a brief foreword there is no text. The photographs are captioned (in rather trite manner) but not identified, in English, French, and Eskimo syllabic. They are well composed, show a variety of young and old people with some of their activities, and the design of the book is pleasing. As a reminiscent picture-book of Eskimos this publication will be of interest to northern visitors.

—*M.B.*

'FEASTING WITH MINE ENEMY'

By Abraham Roseman and Paula Rubel. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1971. 221 pages. $11.00.

Reviewed by Audrey Hawthorn

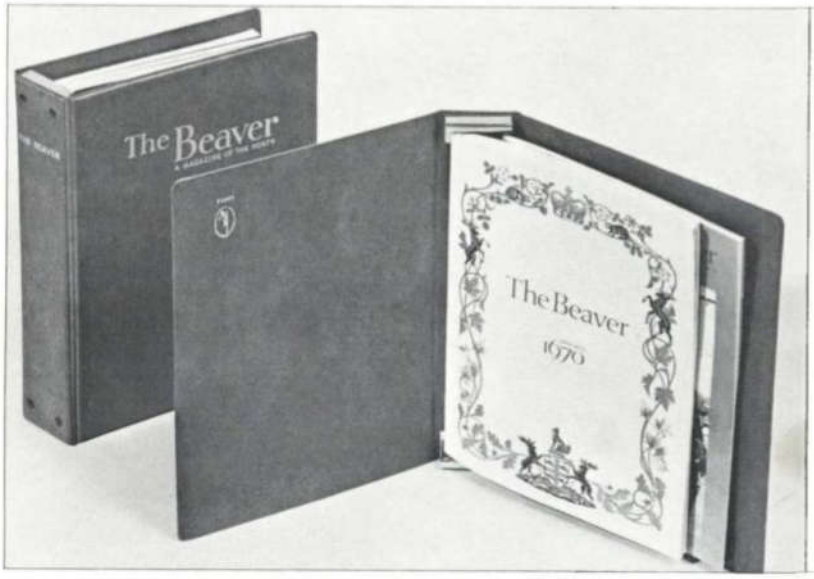
This book has an intriguing title (taken from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene III) and an attractive North West Coast design on the cover jacket. Well designed and printed, this is a misleading invitation to the reader interested in the general culture of the Indians of the North West Coast.

In fact, this is a theoretical study by anthropologists for anthropologists, and is of a specialized nature.

It is an intensive and detailed analysis of the functional interrelationship between lineage, marriage, rank, status, and the potlatch.

The matrilineal decent system and household structures of Tsimsian, Tlingit and Haida, and their potlatch regulations in regard to rank, are given in detail, and compared with the ambilateral descent patterns of the Kwakiutl, Nootka and Bella Coola. There are many diagrammatic schematizations of roles, relationships, and functions. There is a final chapter on a model potlatch system. Also, an extensive bibliography and index. But it is not a book to take to the sea-side for your vacation reading.

Mrs Hawthorn, author of 'Art of the Kwakiutl Indians' is curator and associate professor of anthropology at the University of British Columbia.



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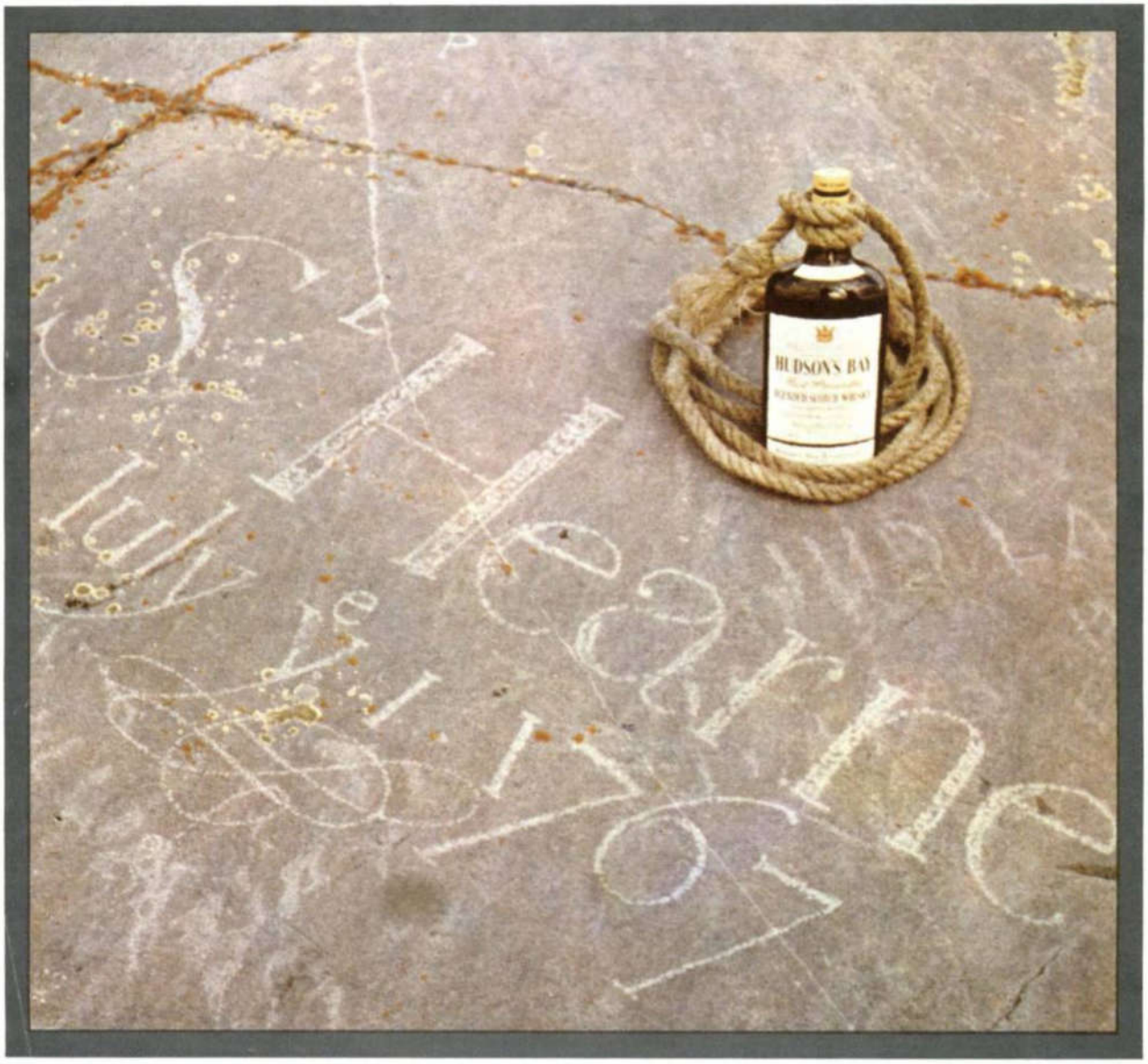

It was from Fort Prince of Wales that Samuel Hearne left on his famous Coppermine Journey and it was there too that he left his name a hundred years to the day before the Confederation of Canada.